



PRACTICAL BUSINESS ENGLISH

New Edition

新编 实用商务英语

主编 邹 勇 纪淑军



西南财经大学出版社

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BUSINESS
ENGLISH**

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

新编实用商务英语/邹勇,纪淑军主编. —成都:西南财经大学出版社,2009.5

ISBN 978 - 7 - 81138 - 193 - 1

I. 新… II. 邹… III. 商务—英语—高等学校:技术学校—教材
IV. H31

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2009)第 003058 号

新编实用商务英语

主编:邹勇 纪淑军

责任编辑:李才

装帧设计:杨红鹰

责任印制:封俊川

出版发行:	西南财经大学出版社(四川省成都市光华村街 55 号)
网 址:	http://www.bookcj.com
电子邮件:	bookcj@foxmail.com
邮政编码:	610074
电 话:	028 - 87353785 87352368
印 刷:	四川森林印务有限责任公司
成品尺寸:	170mm × 240mm
印 张:	17.75
字 数:	270 千字
版 次:	2009 年 5 月第 1 版
印 次:	2009 年 5 月第 1 次印刷
印 数:	1—3000 册
书 号:	ISBN 978 - 7 - 81138 - 193 - 1
定 价:	32.00 元

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前言

随着世界经济一体化的推进与深入,中国与世界近距离接触的机会越来越多,国际间的商务往来也越来越频繁,同时社会对具有国际竞争力的复合型商务人才的需求也越来越旺盛,许多高校也更加重视国际商务专业的建设与发展,商务与英语的复合式发展展现出广阔的前景。在这种趋势下,如何培养既精通经贸专业知识又具备熟练外语技能的复合型人才就成为一大课题。为了适应这种需要,很多高等院校的经贸专业都开设了双语课程,或是在外语专业开设了经贸课程,使学生所学的知识能跟上经济的发展,符合社会经济生活的实际需要。

本书正是以此为目的而编写的立足于国际商务理论与实务和英语教学规律的综合性教材,按照典型的工作内容和过程来选取教学内容,主要包括出口实务、商务谈判、价格术语、商务信函、托收、信用证、保函、货物发运、货物保险、货物商检、通关、理赔和仲裁以及商务礼仪等。本书取材力求贴近国际商务前沿,内容点面结合,使学生能在面的基础上较为广泛地涉猎国际商务领域的相关业务知识,在点的基础上熟悉把握重要业务环节,进而为日后的实际工作打下良好的基础。

每章节按照如下体例进行编写:1. 课文;2. 单词;3. 短语;4. 注释;5. 练习。单词和短语部分列举该章节所需掌握的生词和专业术语,便于学生高效记忆。注释部分对课文中涉及的相关专业背景知识作进一步的阐释、归纳和总结,使学习者一方面能更好地理解课文,另一方面也能在面上进一步拓展。练习部分设计了四种题型,体现英语语言练习和专业知识的练习两大方向,使学习者在习得专业知识的同时,其语言技能也得到训练和提高。同时,练习也能方便教师课堂教学,检查学生的学习效果。

本书由西南财经大学经贸外语学院邹勇教授拟定大纲,并负责全书的总纂。其中,邹勇、傅泳、何明霞、纪淑军曾在进出口公司及金融机构供职,具有丰富的实践经验。编写工作具体分工如下:第一章由李宇辉编写;第二章由邹小奕编写;第三章由刘翊编写;第四章由何明霞编写;第五章由刘家凤编写;第六章由周欣乔、周怡乔编写;第七章由傅泳编写;第八章由刘家凤编写;第九

章由纪淑军编写;第十章由熊婷编写;第十一章由邹勇编写;第十二章由刘家凤编写;第十三章由张永莉编写;第十四章由张光敏编写;第十五章由车瑜编写。

本书既可作为各高等院校外语学院商务英语专业的教材,也可作为工商管理学院国际经济与贸易专业的教材,还可以作为高职高专学校教材,同时也可作为外贸人员以及其他涉外工作人员提高英语技能的自学辅导教材。

本书对任课教师可免费提供 PPT 及参考答案。如需要,可电邮主编或出版社。

本书的出版得到了西南财经大学出版社的鼎力支持和帮助,在此表示衷心的感谢。

由于编者水平有限,时间仓促,错误与疏漏在所难免,恳请各位老师与同行不吝指正。

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2009 年 4 月于成都·光华园

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Chapter 1 Business Negotiation

1. Some Basic Concepts of Negotiation

(1) The Concept of Negotiation

A negotiation is a process of communication between parties to manage conflicts in order to come to an agreement, solve a problem or make arrangements. Negotiation is a basic means of getting what you want from others. It is back-forth communication designed to reach an agreement when you and the other side have some interests that are shared and others that are opposed. It is a common human activity as well as a process that people undertake every day to manage their relationships such as a buyer and a seller, husband and wife, children and parents. The stakes in some of these negotiations are not very high; people needn't have to prepare for the process and the outcome. However, for a business negotiation, it is a series of dealings between the sellers/exporter and the buyers/importer in order to reach an agreement on price, payment, quality, and other terms of conditions of a sale. The whole process of negotiation is based on the premise that both parties are interdependent, that is to say, one side cannot get what he/she wants without taking the other into consideration.

It is difficult for all negotiations to be labeled as successful ones in a strict and rational sense, which means a successful negotiation must satisfy at least the following requirements:

The outcome of a negotiation is a result of mutual giving and taking;

Negotiations happen due to the existence of conflicts; however, no negotiation can proceed smoothly and come to a satisfactory solution without collaboration between the participants;

In spite of unequal strength and power on the side of one party, it should not be viewed as a success if the other party cannot exercise influence on the result of the negotiation, which is a show of the equal right of the parties.

The internal structure of negotiation is:

- ◆ Determine interests and issues
- ◆ Design and offer options
- ◆ Introduce criteria to evaluate options
- ◆ Estimate reservation points
- ◆ Explore alternatives to agreement

◆Reach an agreement

On the whole, we can find that business negotiation is a crucial step in business trade. So having a better understanding and practice in dealing with the problems in business negotiation is of great significance to the trading parties.

(2) The Importance of Business Negotiation

Negotiation plays a basic part in conclusion of a contract and has direct influence on the conclusion and implementation of a contract, and also has a great bearing on the economic interest of the parties concerned. Negotiation is at the heart of every transaction and, for the most part, it comes down to the interaction between two sides with a common goal (profits) but divergent methods. These methods (the details of the contracts) must be negotiated to the satisfaction of the both parties. Negotiation is a dynamic process of adjustment because each of the parties has his own objective in trade operation. The sellers intend to sell the goods or services at a higher price, while the buyers intend to buy the goods or services at a lower price. Each party presses for the attainment of its own goal. But some elements of cooperation must be present, otherwise there will be no agreement at all and the opportunity to take part in the activity will be lost.

The dual elements of conflict and cooperation are described here; it is the mutual interest of participants to come to some agreement and this provides a cooperative aspect; however, the interests of participants are opposed, and this is the basis for rivalry. The negotiator is pulled in two directions at the same time; towards holding out for more with the risk of losing all; towards agreeing to his opponent's demands and securing the bargain, but sacrificing the chance of a possible higher reward.

The parties know that the value of any successful bargain is limited because opportunities provided in the administration of the contact or by other tenders may correct any serious unbalance. On the other hand, the bargain may be of significant value in the consequence it possesses for the further, not only because of its actual term, but also for the manner of its negotiation and its impact on human relationship.

Success in negotiation is seen not to be measured in points scored off one's opponent, but in the contribution to the negotiation itself. Each party must accept the need to modify its own demands necessary to meet the requirements of the negotiation objective. There is no room in a negotiation team for a certain person to insist on pursuing limited departmental interests to the detriment of his team's overall success.

2. The Forms of Business Negotiation

In general, there are two forms of business negotiation; the oral form and the written

form. That is to say, business negotiation is conducted either by correspondence or by face-to-face talk, and involves all kinds of terms and conditions of a sales contract including quality, quantity, packing, shipment, payment, insurance, inspection, claims, arbitration and force majeure, etc.

3. The Overall Framework of International Business Negotiation

International business negotiation is a consultative process between governments, trade organizations, multinational enterprises, private business firms and buyers and sellers in relation to investment and import and export of products, machinery and equipments and technology. Negotiation is one of the important steps taken towards completing import and export trade agreements.

To reach the desired results, the negotiators must seriously carry out the relative trade policies of their own countries. They should have good manners and speak fluent English. They should have a profound knowledge of professional technology and international markets. They should know the specifications, packing, features and advantages of the products and be able to use idiomatic and professional terms. They should know something about their counterparts, such as their habits and customs in order to easily find harmony with them when negotiating business.

In general, an overall framework of international business negotiation covers the following aspects: background factors, the atmosphere and the process.

(1) Background Factors

Background factors refer to objectives, environment, market position, third parties and negotiations. They influence the process of negotiation and the atmosphere in a positive or negative way. Objectives mean what each side desires to achieve in the end. They are common, conflicting or complementary interests in both sides wanting a successful transaction to take place; their interests conflict as profit to one is cost to the other; and complementary interest brings them together. Common and complementary objectives leave direct and positive effects while conflicting objectives have negative ones on the negotiation process. Environment here is defined as the political, social and structural factors related to both parties. It often hinders the process in international negotiation. This is more typically the case with those parties that are not familiar to each other with their different background. Political and social aspects can affect the process whereas market structure does the atmosphere. The market position of the parties involved plays a leading role in the negotiation process. The third parties such as governments, brokers, consultants and so on may influence the process with their own objec-

tives. Negotiators affect the negotiating process by means of their own experience and negotiating skills.

(2) Atmosphere

The atmosphere is of great importance to the whole process of the international business negotiation. The atmosphere and the process influence each other at each stage. Atmosphere refers to the perceived “milieu” around the interaction, how each party regards the other’s behavior, and the properties of the process. It has to do with people’s perception of reality. To be more exact, in negotiation it is the perception of reality that is far more important than the reality itself. Some characteristics of the atmosphere are dominant at one stage; others at other stages. For example, cooperation is dominant at the pre-negotiation rather than conflict, as both sides look for mutual solutions. Different characteristics of atmosphere dominate from process to process. These characteristics are classified as conflict vs cooperation, power vs dependence and expectations. The existence of conflict and cooperation is a fundamental characteristic of the negotiation process. On one hand, both sides have some common interests in finding a solution to the problem that fits them both. On the other hand, a conflict of interests may arise, as cost to one can mean income to the other. The relation between power and dependence is closely related to the actual power relation, which is affected by the value of the relationship to the sides and their available alternatives. As for expectations, there are two types: long-term expectations with respect to the possibilities and values of the future business; short-term expectations regarding prospects for the present deal. Expectations develop and change in different stages of the process.

(3) The Process of Negotiation

The process of international business negotiations is made up of the three different stages. A stage is defined as a specific part of the process and covers all actions and communications by either side pertaining to negotiations made during that part. Either side communicates with the other to exchange information within each stage. A specific stage comes to an end where both sides decide to proceed on to the next stage or decide to abandon the communication if they see no point in further negotiations. The three different stages are: pre-negotiation, face-to-face negotiation and post-negotiation.

4. Features of International Business Negotiation

For a successful agreement, participants need to know negotiation principles and tactics. There are two principles in international business negotiations. First, at the beginning of the negotiation, the negotiators should know well their desired results and not

be willfully manipulated by their counterparts. Only with a definite purpose will the negotiators grasp the key to the negotiation and realize their expected purpose; the negotiators will need to put forward what they expect, take a firm stand and make clear their position.

In international business negotiations, price is usually the key point because it directly concerns the economic benefits to both sides. Both sides seek a desired result.

To get the expected result or achieve a certain purpose, the negotiators, should calculate fully and decide three different targets: 1) the best target; 2) the intermediate target; 3) the acceptable target.

(1) The Best Target

The best target is to achieve all desired results. You should know well whether your first quotation is high or low if it is generally accepted by your counterpart. Usually both sides have a few bargains before acceptance. In the beginning, make a high offer and negotiate for the best target. Generally speaking, persons who firmly maintain the desired objectives to the end can obtain the best deal.

(2) The Intermediate Target

The intermediate target is fair for both sides, although slightly lower than the best target. Don't begin negotiating at too low a price. Your quotation is to be a little lower each time. Do it step by step. Each time you reduce the price, you should remain serious about the desired results. Under this situation, your counterpart may well accept your quotation as the best possible price. It is likely that you may reach an agreement at this price. Please keep in mind that taking a serious and firm attitude is the key to avoiding further price reductions and unnecessary expenses. This will result in increase profits. If you meet with negotiators who always bargain using harsh language, do not be angry. This indicates that they want to buy your products. You should be patient and friendly, using soft words and moderate speaking speed and tone, knowing well what not to say, what to say and when to say. When you feel in danger of going into a deadlocked negotiation, it is suggested to request a break or rest. Then readjust your plan and continue the negotiation.

(3) The Acceptable Target

The acceptable target is the minimum level both sides can bear. It should not be exposed to your counterpart at the beginning of the negotiation. Your counterpart may not believe it and although the price is the lowest, he may reject your quotation. On the other hand, even if the agreement is reached at the minimum acceptable price, your counterpart may not have a satisfactory sense of having brought your price down.

In brief, the purpose of the negotiation is to arrive at an agreement to both sides'

advantage. The successful results of the negotiations depend on the determined objectives, perseverance and the language expressed by the negotiators. They should do their best to use soft words, speak euphemistically, use less flowery language, have a sense of humor and create a harmonious atmosphere.

5. Basic Rules of International Business Negotiation

(1) Interdependence

“One palm cannot clap.” This is true of everyday life, and is also no exception to conducting a business negotiation, in which both sides are locked together on account of their goals. A seller cannot exist unless he has a buyer, which determines this relationship between them.

(2) Concealment and Openness

In many business negotiations, both parties may conceal their real intentions and goals to better their chances of getting the best deal possible. As this is an open secret, smooth communication and good mutual understanding will to some degree become difficult, which does easily lead to misunderstanding. To achieve more satisfactory results, both parties will have to decide how open and honest they should be about personal preferences and needs, and to what extent they should trust the other side.

(3) Different Negotiation Situations

Both parties must change as required of them by situations; if either of them fails to find out which type of negotiation is necessary in a particular situation, the odds are that he will fail.

(4) Bargaining Mix and Creativity

How to make both “sides” meet in negotiations without causing much loss to either, which may bring both out of the win-lose mix and help accomplish their objectives, requires creativity. And the discovery of this is based on the environment where negotiators feel cooperative and dedicated to seeking the best solution possible instead of meeting but one side’s needs.

(5) Proposal Exchange

The heart of negotiation is the exchange of offers and proposals. In a “good faith” negotiation, an offer is made out to be accepted or returned with a counter-offer. There is an unstated assumption in negotiation that both sides will show their exchange of offers to the process of finding a solution by making concessions to the other side’s offer. And through the process of offer and counter-offer a point is reached on which both sides will agree. To be successful, a negotiator needs to be able to understand the events that are

taking place during the exchange of offers, and to know how to use them to advantage, to keep the other side from using them to the negotiator's disadvantage.

(6) Winner or Loser

In the process of business negotiation, if both parties try to reach an agreement that maximizes their outcome, it may lead either party to be concerned only with his ends and ignore the needs of other side. Such a situation will most probably create problems. So the cardinal rules for a successful negotiator to remember are that:

His/Her reputation, and effort to maintain that reputation by means of their negotiating behavior.

Most negotiation occurs in relationships that will be maintained over a long period of time.

The settlements that are satisfactory and durable are the ones that meet the needs of both sides.

6. The General Procedure of International Negotiation

(1) Preparing Stage

Any experienced business negotiator will tell you that there is never enough time to get ready. Since there are typical time constraints of international negotiations, good preparations must be made before negotiation begins. Good negotiation preparations mainly cover two aspects: 1) gathering information and planning strategies and tactics; 2) manipulation of the negotiation situation. The best negotiators on both sides manage such detail with great care. To get the most out of business negotiators it is important to have every causal factor working in your favor. The time spent in careful planning and detailed adjustment of situational factors is an important investment. The following checklist is the general work prepared for negotiation:

- Assessment of the Situation and the People
- Agenda
- Concession Strategies
- Facts to Confirm During the Negotiation
- Manipulation of the Negotiation Situation
- Develop Strategies and Tactics
- Pre-negotiation Checklist
- ◆ Assessment of the Situation and the People

It is widely recognized that systematic planning and preparation are critical elements of successful business negotiations. Experienced export executives devote substan-

tial time to these functions before sitting down at the negotiation table. As a general rule, the more complex the transaction to be negotiated, the longer the planning period required. The preparatory phase is also lengthier for international transactions than for domestic one, because of difficulty in gathering all of necessary preliminary information. Most companies can achieve their export objective by following a systematic approach in pre-negotiation phase.

The most common mistakes in business negotiation reflect insufficient preparation. The majority of these errors can be eliminated or greatly reduced, if adequate attention is given to doing the background work.

Preparing for negotiations is time consuming, demanding and often complex. For simplicity, three factors are recommended for specific review and preparation. They involve:

- Know Your Own Position
- Know the Other Side's Position
- Know Your Competition

These three are considered critical for the pre-negotiation phase. Failure to prepare yourself on these points may result in a less than satisfactory outcome. Remember the advice of experienced negotiators: "Don't negotiate if you are unprepared."

► Know Your Own Position

The first requirement in preparing for business negotiations is to have a clear understanding of what you are planning to achieve. Objectives should be realistic. Do not confuse wishes and goal.

Objectives may be tangible, intangible or a combination of both. Often the intangible aspects are neglected or considered unimportant in setting objectives. For example, as an exporter you may hope to acquire recognition as a reliable supplier of quality products. This intangible goal is likely to influence your overall negotiating strategy.

Knowing your own negotiating position implies an understanding of your company's strengths and weakness. In analyzing your strengths, consider both those that are real and those perceived. For instance, if you are an exporter from quality goods, you may be perceived as having an advantage vis-à-vis other suppliers. Your firm's strengths should be identified so that they can be brought forward when you need them during the negotiations.

Weaknesses also need to be identified and corrective measures taken to improve the deficiencies when possible. The other party is likely to bring your firm's weak points into the open at a critical moment in the negotiations to obtain maximum concessions. Some weaknesses can not be eliminated, but others can be either reduced or turned into

strengthens.

Small and medium-size exporters often view themselves as being in a weak position vis-à-vis buyers from larger organizations. If you are negotiating on behalf of a small export firm with limited production capacity you may turn this perceived weakness into strength during negotiations by stressing low overhead costs, flexibility in production lines and willingness to accept small orders. Too often exporters fail to recognize that many of their perceived weaknesses can become strengths in different business situations.

Small exporters who are highly committed to their specific transactions are likely to increase their strength vis-à-vis larger importers. When large companies deal with smaller ones they may be over-confident and thus come to the negotiating table poorly prepared. In negotiations, highly committed companies that do their background work prior to the talks improve their chances of achieving their desired outcome.

► Know the Other Side's Position

Just as important as knowing what your company wants from the forthcoming negotiations is understanding what the other party hopes to obtain. This information is not always available, particularly if the discussions are with a new client. The best way of ascertaining what the opposite party is aiming for is to put yourself in the other's shoes. It may be necessary to make assumption about the other party's goals, as well as its strengths and weaknesses. Whatever assumptions are made, they should be verified during the negotiations.

Various sources of information can also be explored to get details on the other party, for instance, past clients, commercial banks, chambers of commerce and trade associations. These may provide details that help you put together a picture of the other party's situation.

You may wish to get background information simply by asking the other party relevant questions beforehand. Experienced negotiators know to be not only effective listeners but also when to ask the right questions to obtain the information they require.

Knowing the other side's strengths and weaknesses, and its objectives and priorities, is an important element in your preparations. These factors are helpful in drawing up your negotiating strategy, tactics and counter-offers. Skill in using positions of strength is an essential aspect of negotiations toward its objective at the expense of the other side.

► Know Your Competition

In addition to the above considerations, it is important to know who your competition will be in this specific transaction. Negotiators often prepare for business discus-

sions without giving much attention to the influence of competition. In marketing negotiations between two sides, an invisible third party, consisting of one or more competitors, is often present and influencing the outcome. Competitors, although invisible, are key players in such discussions.

For example, how many times has the exporter been asked to improve an offer because he or she is told by the other side that competitors can do better? Unless you plan for such situations in advance and develop ways to overcome them, you may find it difficult to achieve the desired outcome in your negotiations.

Research on the competition is essential to identify the relative strengths and weaknesses of such third parties in the discussions you have ahead. It is possible that a competitor can offer better terms than your company, but because of full capacity it may not be in a position to accept an order.

Such information if known can help you resist requests to improve your offer.

In gathering information on your competition, you should address the following questions:

- Who are our competitors for this transaction?
- What are our strengths vis-à-vis this competition?
- What are our weakness vis-à-vis our competitors?
- How can competition affect our company's goals in these negotiations?

◆ Agenda

In general, most business negotiators come to the negotiation table with an agenda for the meeting in mind. It is important to do two things with that agenda. First, write out the agenda for all members of your negotiating team. Second, don't try to settle each issue at a time. In any bargaining situation, it is better to get all the issues and interests out on the table before trying to settle any one of them. This will be particularly true when the other side brings a carefully considered agenda. A safe strategy for you is to check beforehand with your counterpart about the agenda. However, attacks on agenda should be used with caution as it will result in great discomfort for your counterpart.

◆ Concession Strategies

Concession strategies should be decided upon and written down before negotiations begin. Such a process – discussion and recording – goes a long way toward ensuring that negotiators stick to the strategies. In the midst of a long negotiation there is a tendency to make concessions. When making concessions, you need to have specific reasons for the size of each concession you make. When bargaining with Japanese, you will notice very quickly that they never make a concession without first taking a break. Issues and agreements are reconsidered away from the social pressure of the negotiation table. This

is good practice for you to learn.

► Know Your Negotiating Limits

A crucial part of preparations is setting limits on your concession – the minimum price if you are an importer. During the pre-negotiation phase, each side must decide on the boundaries beyond which there is no longer a ground for negotiation. For example, as an exporter, you should know at which point a sale becomes unprofitable, based on a detailed costing of your product and other associated expenses. Similarly, if you are an importer you must determine in advance the maximum price and conditions that are acceptable. The difference between these two points is the zone of agreement. Generally, it is within this range that you and the other party will make concessions and counter-proposals.

Your opening position as an exporter should therefore be somewhere between the lowest price that you should accept for your goods and the highest price that you perceive to be acceptable by the other party. It is important that your initial offer be realistic, credible and reasonable, to encourage the other party to respond. An opening position highly favorable to you that can not be justified, for example, is likely to send a negative message to your counterpart, resulting in a lack of trust and possibly more aggressive tactics by the other side.

When setting your opening offer you should take into consideration the cultural background, market conditions and business practices in the other party's environment. In some cases an opening position followed by rapid concessions is considered normal, while in others such tactics reflect a lack of seriousness in developing sound business relationship.

Generally, when setting either upper or lower limits, experienced negotiators give themselves a sufficient range of options to work with. Inexperienced executives often mistakenly establish one fixed target, allowing themselves little flexibility for making concessions.

In planning upper and lower limits, you should therefore ask yourself the following questions:

- What is the worst offer I am willing to accept?
- What is the best offer I can expect?
- What is the offer I consider most likely to obtain?

◆ Facts to Confirm During the Negotiation

No matter how careful the analysis and how complete the information available, all critical information and assumption should be reconfirmed at the negotiation table. As part of the preparations a list of such facts should be discussed among the members of