

新时代大学商务英语系列教材
New Century College Business English

总主编：王正元

商务英语写作教程

主 编：王永祥

副主编：刘淑梅 岳福新

主 审：田海龙 (澳) David Jones



BUSINESS ENGLISH

新时代大学商务英语课程建设工程项目



机械工业出版社
China Machine Press



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BUSINESS ENGLISH

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序

PREFACE

伴随经济全球化和我国经济国际化的进程,国内外大中型企业、跨国公司 etc 对既懂商务又会英语的复合型人才的需求与日俱增,这也促进了我国高等教育商务英语专业的快速发展。目前,全国有 700 多所高等院校开设了外贸英语、商务英语等课程,工商管理、金融等商科专业也都开设了以商务为核心内容的英语课程,部分院校甚至设立了商务英语专业。近几年来,全国性的商务英语教学、学术研讨会频频召开。我国国际商务快速发展及人才市场对商务英语人才的强劲需求、外语就业市场人才多元化推动了英语专业教学改革和教材的建设,各院校都迫切需要一套能体现商务特色与人才培养规格相适应的新教材,以改变英语教材与人才培养和需求不相适应的状况。

商务英语属于专门用途英语,国外大学多将其归为 ESP (English for Special Purposes)。目前,我们国内这样系统的专业教材并不很多。王正元教授领衔总主编、由全国 20 余所大学 40 余名英语教授、副教授、讲师历时两年多编写的这套“新时代大学商务英语系列教材”的出版是我国高等教育商务英语教材建设的一个新成果。

这套教材共 14 本,包括读写、视听说、写作、口译,涵盖了商务英语的基本主体课程,编著者基于“商务知识 + 英语能力 = 核心竞争力”的编写理念,力求在企业战略、市场营销、人力资源、企业文化、经营运作等商务语境中培养学生的英语交际能力。商务知识与英语能力相结合、商务语境与语言活动相结合、能力培养与就业需求相结合的编写思路使这套教材商务内容丰富,英语操练有的放矢,凸显了人才培养规格,给这套教材带来了亮点。

这套教材在内容安排上注重了语言的体验观、语用观,体现了商务英语的科学性、系统性、实用性及任务型教学法。这是一套适合高等院校商务英语专业和商科英语课程使用的教材。

同传统的英语语言文学比较起来,商务英语是我们这个时代经济发展催生的新事物,它必将在市场经济的强劲需求中茁壮成长。为更好地培养复合型人才,英语教材的建设任务是繁重的。这套教材需要在使用中逐步完善提高,以满足我国对外经济贸易、国际商务活动对英语人才的需要。

对外经济贸易大学副校长 博士生导师 徐子健

2008 年 10 月

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前言

FOREWORD

1. 本套教材编写的指导思想及目标

为了编写这套教材,我们反复学习了教育部高等学校英语教学大纲,访问了毕业生用人单位,举行了英语毕业生座谈会,广泛地听取了师生的意见。

高等学校英语专业《英语教学大纲》指出:“我们也应当清醒地面对这样一个现实,即我国每年仅需要少量外语与文学,外语与语言学相结合的专业人才以从事外国文学和语言学的研究工作,而大量需要的则是外语和其他相关学科——如外交、经贸、法律、新闻等结合的复合型人才,培养这种复合型外语及专业人才是社会主义市场经济对外语专业提高的要求,也是新时代的要求。”我们将这一精神作为我们这套教材编写的指导思想,并努力使这套教材达到这样的目标:

- 1) 教材内容要有较强的时代性、实用性、针对性、系统性。
- 2) 安排好商务英语专业知识、语言训练及文化背景知识。
- 3) 教材要有利于培养学生的英语思维力、创新力、语用能力。
- 4) 运用任务型的教学方法,为学生自己学习提供平台。

2. 本套教材编写的理念

努力使这套教材满足三个要求:全球化经济发展对人才规格的要求;学生就业求职的要求;商务英语专业学科建设的要求,突出“商务知识+英语能力=核心竞争力”的编写理念:

- 学习反映全新商务知识的英文语篇,掌握现代商务理念。
- 模拟走进商务语境,拓展国际商务视野。
- 结合案例商情,训练英语交际能力。
- 运用视、听、说先进教学手段,给学生带去体验学习英语的快乐。

3. 本套教材的特点

这套教材不同于以文学、文化为内容,以传授知识为主要目的的教材,而是以培养商务英语交际能力为目标的教材,教材编写突出以下特点:

- 1) 商务知识的实用性。本套教材内容包括了商务背景、市场营销、战略管理、国际贸易、金融常识、人力资源、企业文化、企业案例等商务实用知识。
- 2) 语言学习的认知性。本套教材各课的 Reading 部分,根据不同的语篇采取了语篇视点、认知参照点、框架、图式等分析方法对课文分析作了提示,以培养学生的语篇分析能力

和快速获得信息的能力。

3) 完成任务的体验性。教材安排了以案例 (Case) 或话题 (Topic) 为内容的讨论或演练, 让学生在商务交际中体验和完成某项商务任务。

4) 商务知识的可延伸性。教材在内容安排上注重商务知识的延伸, 注重商务、语言、文化、行动的结合及文本引申论。

我们在编写这套教材时, 还兼顾了这样一些关系: 商务知识与英语能力的关系; 完成任务与英语专业四、八级考试的关系; 英语基础与商务知识的关系。精读课每个单元都安排了听、说、读、写、译项目, 每个项目都给出了要点提示, 并提炼出语法聚焦, 尽量使这套教材充分体现: 以商务知识为载体、以培养英语交际能力为目的、坚持以市场需求为导向、以培养创造力为宗旨、重视英语专业四、八级考试规格。

4. 本套教材的构成及使用建议

本套教材共 14 本, 包括:

精读课: 商务英语读写教程 1-8 册

视听课: 商务英语视听说教程 1-4 册

商务口译: 商务英语口译教程

商务写作: 商务英语写作教程

本套教材使用建议:

年 级	一年级		二年级		三年级		四年级	
学 期	上	下	上	下	上	下	上	下
读写教程	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
视听说	1	2	3	4				
商务口译							√	√
商务写作					√	√		

本套教材是集体科研和多所院校合作的成果, 北京外国语大学、广东外语外贸大学、东北财经大学、上海财经学院、天津外国语学院、北京工商大学、广州大学、辽宁大学、天津商业大学、兰州商学院、哈尔滨工程大学、大连海事大学、哈尔滨商业大学、河北经贸大学、沈阳师范大学、燕山大学等高校几十名教授、专家、教师参加了本套教材的编写工作, 付出了艰辛的劳动。

本套教材的编写还得到了许多同事和朋友的大力帮助, 10 余名美国、英国、加拿大外籍语言专家分别审读了各册书稿, 辽宁大学张东辉老师、燕山大学姜炼老师为本套教材中的视听说教程做了大量高难度的视频、音频处理工作, 对外经贸大学副校长、博士生导师徐子健教授为本套教材写了序言, 我对大家的工作和帮助深表感谢。

“新时代大学商务英语系列教材”编委会的全体成员为这套教材付出了汗水和艰辛, 但教材中一定还有很多不足, 欢迎批评指正。我们愿乘商务英语发展的东风, 和大家一起, 筚路蓝缕, 以启山林, 推动大学商务英语教材建设。

总主编 王正元

2008 年 5 月



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Chapter 1



Business Letter

Pre-reading Questions:

- ▶ 1. What is a business letter?
 - ▶ 2. What are the main differences between a business letter and a social letter?
 - ▶ 3. What principles should we stick to when writing a business letter?
-

Generally speaking, business letters can be classified into two categories: personal business letters and official business letters. The former include letters written on a personal basis such as applications for scholarships, university entries or jobs while the latter refer to those written on behalf of a company like inquiries, offers and orders.

Writing for a business context or audience can be distinctly different from writing for social purposes. A good business letter should be formal, positive, friendly and sincere while a social letter can be informal, intimate and humorous. In most cases, the business letter will be the first impression that you make on your partner, but a social letter is most often written to a friend or an acquaintance. What's more, the form of a business letter is more complicated than a social letter.

With the rapid development of science and technology, e-mail (see Chapter 6 for e-mail writing) has become extremely popular today in the business world, but there is no sign yet that it will replace paper-based business letters entirely. Owing to the influence of e-mail, the style of business letters is possibly less formal than it used to be, but your writing must still adhere to the conventions in form and content.

I. Form

Letters to business firms differ considerably from those to private persons in form. Business

letters are usually more complex. When examined structurally, they can be divided into the following twelve parts.

- 1) Letterhead
- 2) Reference and date
- 3) Inside name and address
- 4) Attention line
- 5) Salutation
- 6) Subject line
- 7) Body
- 8) Complimentary close
- 9) Signature
- 10) Enclosure
- 11) Carbon copy notation
- 12) Postscript

Each part mentioned above occupies a fixed place in the letter. Now we will deal with them one by one in detail and exemplify them when necessary.

1. Letterhead 信头

The letterhead provides the sender's name, full address, the telephone number, fax number, cable address and e-mail address. If you use stationery, it is usually printed with such a heading at the top.

If you need to type out the letterhead, it is a common practice to place it in the top-right corner or the top-left corner of the first page. You can consider one of the following two forms: blocked or indented.

Full block form:

Chapel Hill Arts and Crafts Corporation
6123 Farrington Road
Apt. G11
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
USA
Tel: (919) 929-6666
Fax: (919) 968-8888
E-mail: CHACC@yahoo.com

Indented form:

Chapel Hill Arts and Crafts Corporation
6123 Farrington Road
Apt. G11
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

USA

Tel: (919) 929-6666

Fax: (919) 968-8888

E-mail: CHACC@yahoo.com

The choice of either of the two forms depends entirely on your preference. The main purpose of designing it is to make it pleasing in form and easy to type. It is necessary, however, to point out that with the increasingly extensive use of computers today, writers of business letters tend to employ the full block form from the beginning to the end of the letter to save energy and time.

2. Reference and Date 编号和日期

Reference, often abbreviated to "ref", is frequently used in official business letters rather than personal business letters. When one business firm writes to another, it will provide a reference, which may be a file number, a departmental code or the initials of the signer followed by the initials of the typist of the letter. It is usually typed immediately below the letterhead with marks like "Your ref:" and "Our ref:" to avoid confusion. For example:

Your ref: D1234

Our ref: WYX/GX

If letterhead stationery is used, you can simply type the date two or three lines below the reference flush with left-hand margin. The date, month and year should be typed in full. Some months of the year can be typed in shortened forms like "Jan.", "Feb.", "Aug.", "Sept.", "Oct.", "Nov.", "Dec.", but the rest of the months should be written in full (March, April, May, June and July). The abbreviations for dates are 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th, although the -st, -nd, -rd and -th that follow the numbers can be omitted. The abbreviated form of the year (e. g. 07) is not acceptable in written business letters. Look at the following examples:

20th June, 2007

June 20, 2007

3. Inside Name and Address 封内名称和地址

The inside name and address refer to the name and the complete address of the addressee. This part is often left out in personal letters, but not in official business letters. It should begin at the left margin, at least two lines below the date. It appears exactly the same as on the envelope. The use or non-use of punctuation also depends on the preference of the writer.

When writing the name, one has to use the ordinary courtesy titles, such as Mr., Miss, followed by the official position, if any, of the addressee. For example:

Mr. John Smith, President

Hawaii Export Corporation

101 West Tenth Street

Honolulu

Hawaii 96822

USA

Ms. Jane Smith, Sales Manager

Textile Import and export Corporation

31 North Olive Avenue

West Palm Beach

Florida 33402

USA

4. Attention Line 注意事项

Attention line does not appear in a personal letter, nor is it a must in a business letter. It is only used when the writer addresses the letter to a business firm and wishes that a specific person or department of the firm would read the letter or would know the main purpose of the letter. It is generally placed below the inside address as follows:

Attention: Sales Manager

Attention: Import Department

5. Salutation 称呼语

The salutation is a word or phrase of greeting used to begin a letter. The form of salutation to be used depends entirely on how well the addresser knows the addressee. If the name of the addressee is unknown, we can use the customary salutation: "Dear Sir" to a man, "Dear Madam" to a woman or "Dear Sirs" or "Dear Sir or Madam" or "Gentlemen" to a firm. In such cases, we may also use a job title followed by Dear Sir/Madam as shown in the following:

Personnel Manager/Human Resources Director/Sales Manager

Dear Sir/Madam,

When the name of the addressee is already known, the surname of the addressee is used rather than the first name or Christian name, for example:

Dear Mr. White:

Dear Mrs. White:

Dear Ms. White:

Dear Miss White:

The salutation of a business letter is usually typed flush with the left margin two lines below the attention line and two lines above the subject line. It is generally followed by a colon instead of a comma in a friendly personal letter.

6. Subject Line 事由

Subject line is peculiar to business letters. It is used to give the main idea of the letter so that the receiver may know at a glance what this letter is about. It is typed in the middle or flush with the left margin below the salutation as follows:

Subject: Computer Software

7. Body 正文

The body is the main part of a letter. It is usually divided into several paragraphs with an extra line space in between so that they are readily visible. The common practice now is that all paragraphs begin flush with the left-hand margin.

When writing, we have to make sure that each paragraph serves a special purpose. The beginning paragraph usually refers to the previous correspondence, if any, or the intention or purpose of the letter. The middle part explains the requests, demands, plans or opinions. The

ending paragraph expresses hopes or wishes.

8. Complimentary Close 信尾敬语

The complimentary close is a conventional phrase employed to end the letter. It begins two lines below the last line of the body, aligning with the salutation. The most commonly used complimentary closes in business letters are as follows:

Yours truly,

Yours faithfully,

Yours sincerely,

What deserves our special attention is that only the first word of the complimentary close is capitalized and that a complimentary close always ends with a comma. Generally speaking, if you know the name of the person you are corresponding with, you use "Yours sincerely", otherwise "Yours faithfully".

9. Signature 签名

It is customary to type the name of the firm or company of the addresser two-line spaces below complimentary close. Then the signature is written below the name of the firm or company. It is always signed by hand. Since a hand-written signature is very often illegible, the signer's name should be typed underneath the signature for the convenience of identification, followed by the signer's job title or position. Look at the following example:

Yours truly,

Tianjin Textiles Import and Export Corp.

(Signature)

Wang Dawei

President

10. Enclosure 附件

Enclosure is needed only when something is enclosed in the letter. It can be abbreviated to Enc. or Encl., usually typed below the signature. For example:

Enclosure: Price List

Enc. : Price List

11. Carbon Copy Notation 抄送

Carbon copy notation merely indicates that copies of the letter are simultaneously sent to other persons or organizations concerned so that they are in the know. It is usually typed in the shortened form C. C. followed by the names of persons or organizations that the letter has been sent to. For example:

C. C. : Mr. G. White

C. C. : Shanghai Branch

12. Postscript 附言

The postscript is a message appended at the end of a letter after the signature. It is used to add an important piece of information the writer has forgotten to mention. Sometimes it is also given for emphasis. Usually it is typed two-line spaces below the carbon copy notation:

P. S. : We will send you the report next week.

The postscript is seldom, if ever, used in official business letters because it may give the addressee an impression of the absent-mindedness or carelessness of the writer. Whenever such a case arises, the best thing to do is to retype the letter.

Here is a sample of the general position of these parts in currently popular full block form:

Letterhead	
Your reference: CB1234	The receiver's reference (if there is)
Our reference: XY/XY	The sender's reference
May 15, 2007	Date of the letter
Mr. John Smith, President	Inside name and address
Hawaii Import Corporation	
101 West Tenth Street	
Honolulu	
Hawaii 96822	
Attention: Sales Manager	Attention line
Dear Sir or Madam:	Salutation
Subject: <u>Bicycles</u>	Subject line
Body:	
Thank you for your letter of May 10, enquiring for our bicycles.	
As requested, we enclosed a price list and a copy of our catalogue for your consideration. All prices are quoted FOB Shanghai, subject to our final confirmation. Generally, delivery can be made in two months from receipt of an order.	
We look forward to hearing from you.	
Yours truly,	Complementary close
Tianjin Textiles Import and Export Corp.	Signature
(Signature)	

Wang Dawei

President

Enc. : Price List and Catalog Enclosure

C. C. : Mr. G. White Carbon copy notation

P. S. : We will send the sample next week. Postscript

II. Writing of an Envelope

The envelope is also an essential part of a business letter. When the letter is completed, the next step is to address the envelope before posting it. Business envelopes are written in roughly the same way as envelopes for personal letters.

The writer's full name and address should be printed in the upper-left corner of the envelope while the addressee's full name, title and address should be typed about half way down the envelope. The upper right-hand corner is left for stamps or postmarks.

Mr. Li Ming

Tianjin Import and Export Corp.

(stamp)

101 Beimalu Road

Nankai District

Tianjin 300000

CHINA

Mr. John White, Sales Manager

Textile Import and Export Corp.

31 North Olive Avenue

West Palm Beach

Florida 33402

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

What merits our attention here is that the name of the country to which the letter is delivered is demanded by the post office to be written in capital letters.

III. Basic Principles

There are seven principles to follow in writing business letters. They are usually called "Seven-C Principles", for each of them can be expressed with a single word beginning with "c": clarity, conciseness, completeness, courtesy, concreteness, consideration and correctness.

1. Clarity

By clarity is meant clearness of thought or style. A business letter can achieve its purpose only when it conveys the necessary ideas so well that no misunderstanding can occur. Clarity, therefore, should be the ultimate goal of business writing style.

One way to achieve clarity is to eliminate overuse of the passive voice, because it can be ambiguous, uninformative or overly impersonal. For example, "The pricelist will be sent to you next week." is perfect in grammar, but it is not as informative as "We will send you the pricelist next week."

Another way to make the message clear is to avoid ambiguity. For example: "We sent you 3 sample laptops that you requested on July 4." It can mean either that "We sent you 3 sample laptops on July 4." or "You requested the samples on July 4." The improper use of personal pronouns, sentence structures and ambiguous words could all lead to misunderstandings.

2. Conciseness

Conciseness means expressing much in few words. Writing for business should be crisp and succinct. With this goal in mind, we have to avoid using long wordy expressions (due to the fact that — because; with the exception of — except) and unnecessary repetitions (enclosed herewith — enclosed; during the months of April and May — by the end of May).

In a word, business letters should be to the point, specific and accurate. It does not mean, however, that the letter should be filled with an endless series of short, choppy sentences. The choice of words and structures mainly depends on the ideas to be expressed. We cannot afford to lose courtesy and completeness of sentences to be concise.

3. Completeness

Completeness means that a business letter ought to contain all necessary parts and information. As has been mentioned, there are twelve parts in all. Some of the parts are optional while others are indispensable. In a personal business letter, for example, reference (not the date), attention line, subject line, enclosure, carbon copy notation and postscript can all be done away with. In an official business letter, then, we can leave out enclosure, carbon copy notation and postscript when they are unnecessary.

The body, as the most important part of the letter, should convey the purpose clearly. Usually it expresses the purposes, reasons, and hopes and wishes. It is essential to check the letter carefully to make sure all the important messages are left unsaid.

4. Courtesy

Courtesy is a basic principle for business letter writing. To be courteous, the writer should be polite, considerate and tactful. There are virtually several things to keep in mind.

The first is to use appropriate style. Business writing that is too formal can alienate readers, and an overly obvious attempt to be causal and informal may strike the reader as insincere or

unprofessional.

Second, the writer should remember to employ polite forms and words such as “Thank you”, “Please”, “Would you please...”, “We would quite appreciate it if...”. Such expressions may contribute to a favorable reaction from the addressee.

Finally, to accomplish courtesy, the addresser has to avoid anything that might be offensive, irritating or belittling. Phrases like “You neglected”, “If what you said is true”, “You did not sent us ” may sound offensive and irritating in a business letter.

5. Concreteness

Concreteness refers to the fact that a business letter should be specific, definite and unmistakable. The messages sent in a business letter must be accurate so that the addressee may interpret them correctly and promptly.

For example, “Thank you for your order and we are pleased to inform you that the goods have been dispatched already.” The words “order” and “goods” are too general. To make it concrete, we can add the number of the order and the kind of goods: “Thank you for your order No. 3456 and we are pleased to inform you that the goods required have been dispatched already.”

6. Consideration

Consideration refers to the thinking of the addressee’s interests, desires, requests and feelings. As it mainly concerns the attitude we take when writing a business letter, it is also called the “you-attitude”. As a rule, you-attitude is more likely to help achieve the desired result than we-attitude.

For example, in the statement “We will not be able to send you the sample goods this month.” the negative we-attitude is adopted. It will go something like “You will surely get our sample goods next month.” if we turn it into the positive you-attitude. The idea remains the same, but the way to express it makes the difference.

7. Correctness

Correctness means being free from poor grammar, misspelled words and improper use or lack of punctuations. Friendly tone, standard language, proper statement and accurate figures will also contribute to the correctness of business letters. When the letter is completed, it is crucial to proof-read it carefully, from the beginning to the end, to remove all spelling, structural and technical errors.

To conclude, a signed and sent-out business letter should be polite in tone, exact and concise in wording, neat and clean in layout so that it can create a pleasing impression on the part of the addressee.

IV. Useful Expressions

Some words, phrases and sentences are often used in business communications. Here are a few