

实用英语丛书

实用现代 商务英语写作

Practical
Modern Business
English Writing

周述谨 编著

实用英语丛书

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前 言

随着中国经济与世界经济接轨的步伐加快，国际商务活动越来越频繁，有效的沟通在国际商务活动中起着关键性的作用，而成功的商务写作是最常用的有效沟通方式。

商务写作不同于一般的议论文、散文或小说的写作，它有其独特的写作原则和格式，需要相关的商务或经贸专业知识。本书根据商务写作的特点，分三个部分对其进行全面介绍。第一部分介绍以顾客（读者）为导向的商务英语写作原则和写作流程与技巧；第二部分介绍商务书信的格式和构成以及各类常用商务书信的写作，包括书信、电子邮件、传真、备忘录、会议记录、报告、履历表和求职信；第三部分着重根据国际贸易流程介绍国际贸易书信的写作，包括国际贸易流程介绍、建立业务关系、询盘、发盘、还盘、接受、包装、装运、支付、保险，以及抱怨、索赔和理赔。书中每章都有专业知识介绍和商务写作技巧介绍，并且根据作者多年国际商务工作实践，书中给出了大量实例，以及常用句型和练习。

本书融英语语言知识、商务知识和国际贸易知识于一体，内容新颖、阐释详尽、实例丰富真实、学练结合、实用性强。本书适用于商务英语、国际贸易、国际经济、国际旅游和企业管理等专业的学生使用，对从事外贸、外经、外事和外企工作人员也有很强的实用价值。

希望通过本书的学习，学习者不仅可以提高商务英语写作能力，而且可以学到国际商务专业知识，掌握有效的书面沟通技巧。同时，也恳请读者对书中的不足之处不吝指正。

在本书编写过程中，孙滨蓉参与编写了本书的第二部分。四川大学出版社的黄新路老师为本书的出版付出了大量心血，在此对以上人员表示诚挚谢意。

周述谨

四川外语学院成都学院
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Part One
Reader-Oriented Modern
Business English Writing

Chapter 1

Process of Business English Writing

I . Introduction

Business English writing is an important way of communication in doing international business. At the global and electronic age, writing effectively can help you and your company increase sales and profits by building up good relations with customers, employees, and the public. In addition, proficiency in writing can give you a personal advantage over less capable writers in business and contribute substantially to your self-confidence, which is a necessary quality for business success.

Business writing is different from traditional compositions which have earned high marks in college essays. Business writing requires you to convey information accurately in a plain language that is very clear and readily understood. As Martin Cutts said in his book *The Plain English Guide*:

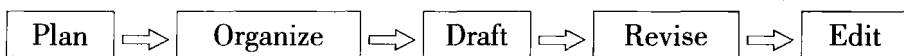
Modern business English is the writing of information in a way that gives a reader a good chance of understanding the document at the first reading.

Reader-oriented writing is the key to successful business writing. Your readers are your customers. You should always provide good customer service. To provide good customer service, first of all, you should produce a top quality product. As a writer, your product is your writing. To produce a top quality product—to write a fine document, you should understand what your readers expect from your writing. Then you can write according to their expectations to meet their needs and get the results you want. Most readers expect to find three things from the writer:

- A clear statement of purpose for the writing
- All the necessary information
- A specific action to do

In order to meet the reader's expectations, an effective writer always follows a special production flow, as any other producer does, to produce—to write his document. The special production flow is the process of business English writing illustrated as follows:

Process of Business English Writing



II . Plan

Plan is the first step and the very important one of the writing process. If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Very often, you may find writing difficult, just because you want to start writing right away without planning. You should plan what to write first, and then write accordingly. If you plan very well, your writing is more likely to get the results you want.

When planning, you should think about your reader's expectations first. The following questions can help you to make an effective planning to meet your reader's needs from the very beginning:

- Who is my reader? (To determine the format and tone of writing)
- Why am I writing? (To determine your purpose for the writing)
- What would I like my reader to do? (To determine your reader's response)
- What does my reader need to know? (To determine which and how much information should be included)

To see the importance of planning, let's study the following case: Mr. Robert Perry, a customer of a bank, wrote a letter requesting that his credit card account not be debited.

The letter from Mr. Perry :

Dear Sir:

I noted your charges on my bill of \$ 100 for the annual fee of my Master Card. Please note that I haven't picked it up yet since I was abroad until a few days ago.

Please do not debit my account.

Yours faithfully,

Robert Perry

Robert Perry

On receiving this letter, Mr. Tony Smith, an employee of the bank wrote a letter back to Mr. Perry.

The letter from Mr. Smith:

Dear Mr. Perry:

Master Card 6645 0028 1288 688

Thank you for your letter dated 28 February, 2009.

We would advise that the card fee would be automatically billed to your card account annually despite your renewed card is remained uncollected. However, annual fee can be refunded provided that the card is uncollected within a certain period and is returned to the Card Center for cancellation.

Please therefore pick up your renewed card at your earliest convenience.

We are pleased to be of service.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Smith

Tony Smith

After reading the Tony's letter, try to answer the questions:

- What do you think Tony's purpose was in writing to Mr. Perry?
- What do you think Tony wanted Mr. Perry to do?
- Can Mr. Perry respond easily according to Tony's request?

Actually, Tony didn't make plan for his writing. His letter is not as effectively written as it could be. It's difficult for you to precisely answer these questions. You may have had to guess by applying the skill of extensive reading. But, in business, nobody wants to do the reading exercise and summarizes the main idea of your writing. You should state your purpose clearly, inform your reader thoroughly and tell your reader what to do and how to do specifically, thus to meet their expectations to provide good service.

If Tony planned, he would answer himself the questions:

- Who is my reader?
My reader is my customer not my colleague. So I will write a letter instead of a memo to him.
- Why am I writing?
I am writing to explain how the annual fee of credit card is charged.
- What would I like Mr. Perry to do?
I would like him to pick up his credit card.
- What does Mr. Perry need to know?
He needs to know what the annual fee is, why we charge it, how it is charged, where to pick up the card, when to pick up the card, who to talk to if Mr. Perry has any questions.

If the four questions get answered well, he planned very well. Then, he can let Mr. Perry know his purpose clearly and provide all the necessary information for Mr. Perry to respond correctly.

III. Organize

After planned well, you can move to the next step—Organize. In this step, you organize what you have planned before. In other words, you make an outline.

The commonly used outline for most of business writing is similar, showing as follows:

- ◇ Opening: Background information
Purpose for the writing
- ◇ Facts: All the necessary information
- ◇ Action: Reader's response
- ◇ Ending: Polite closing

1. Opening

Opening usually contains two parts: background information and the writer's purpose for the writing.

The background information provides a logical introduction to your correspondence and help the reader focus on the subject. It can refer to a previous contact (memo, letter, phone call, etc.). If you have no previous contact with the reader, you can briefly describe the situation that you are writing about. e. g.

- *Thank you for your letter of dated January 8, 2009, enquiring tea pots.*
- *Thanks for your phone call this morning.*
- *Our annual staff party is coming soon!*

The writer's purpose tells the reader why you are writing. The business world is full of busy people. They don't want to waste time reading meaningless letters, memos, faxes and email. They don't want to guess why you are writing to them. It's very important for you to state your purpose very clearly at the beginning of your writing.