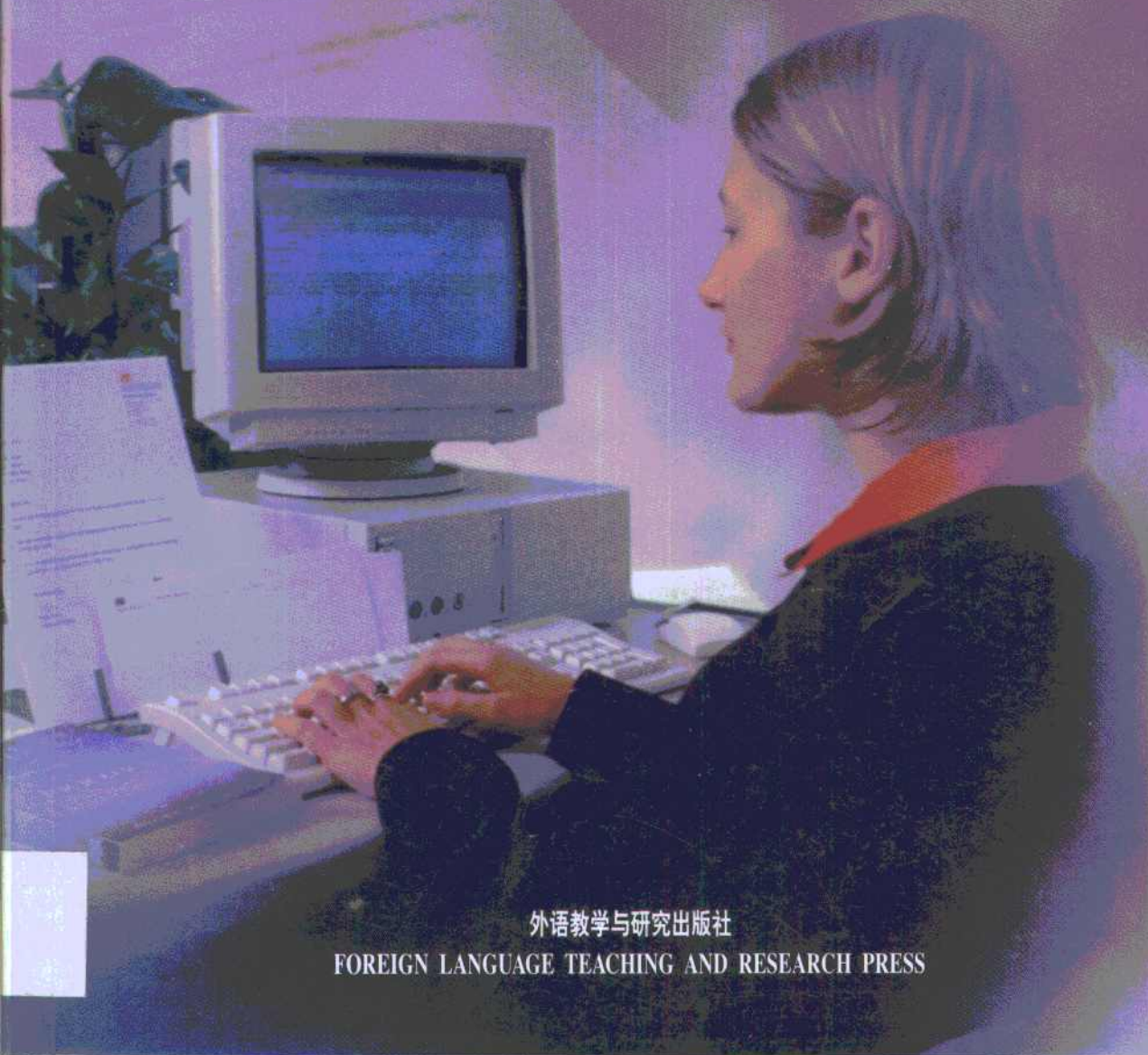


International Business Correspondence Handbook

国际商业书信

罗恩·霍尔特
尼克·桑普森 著



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Preface

Good business letters help increase business and revenue; bad business letters will end up costing your company money and losing business opportunities.

This handbook is designed to help you write good business letters. However, the handbook not only gives guidance in producing good letters in English; the translations will also be instructive in good letter-writing in one's mother tongue.

We all write letters to friends and acquaintances, but those are informal and written in an informal manner. A business letter is a totally different matter. It has to be perfectly clear and free from all ambiguity. Misunderstandings cost money.

The book is divided into four parts.

Part One contains concise hints on how to write good letters and reports. It suggests strategies and provides checklists to guide and edit your writing.

Part Two is a compendium of model letters covering all aspects of international business correspondence, divided into seven sections for easy reference. You simply select the relevant section and then identify, from the contents list, the model you require.

The English model letter is on the left-hand page with useful phrases, taken from the letter, and notes beside it. Comments and alternative phrases are placed at the bottom of the letter. The alternatives will allow you to vary the language you use and are given a line reference. The translation version is put on the right-hand page.

The style of the model letters is simple and direct. The aim is to communicate and not to impress with literary language. An executive working in English as a foreign language will have no difficulty in producing letters that convey a clear message.

Part Three introduces you the most up-to-date means of communication with your correspondents: the use of e-mail. This part is divided into two sections. They provide you the idea of how to write e-mail and show you some model e-mail messages.

Part Four contains three appendices. A model fax is included because so much correspondence now takes place through that invaluable medium. There is a model CV and a collection of key phrases, divided into sections corresponding to the model letter sections.

If you need to write business letters, this handbook will be an invaluable tool to help you in that task.

前言

规范的商业书信有助于扩展业务和增加收益,相反,不规范的商业书信会令公司蒙受损失和失去发展机会。

本手册是为了辅助你写好规范的商业书信而作的。除了提供规范的英文书信之外,还备有中文译本,以供使用。

我们日常给亲友写的信,都是较随便的非正规书信。商业书信完全是另一回事。必须写得清清楚楚,不能有半点含糊。否则,收信人误解了便可能导致经济损失。

本手册分为四篇。

第一篇包含写规范商业书信和报告的简明需知。详列方法和核查细目表,让你可循序渐进,撰写和校正书信。

第二篇覆盖国际通讯各方面的示范书信。为了方便查阅,该部分共分七章。只需选出有关章节,再从各章次目录找出所需范例便可。

英文示范书信位于左页,其旁是从信中节录的实用短语,以及段意解说;评注和替代用语置于书信底下并注明行数,以方便更改信中的遣词造句。此外,对应的中文版书信编排在右页,一目了然。

商业书信以传情达意为主,不应以艰深难懂的词句来哗众取宠。示范书信的文体简洁而切题,以英语作为第二语言的行政人员参考本手册,能写出简明扼要、清楚易懂的商业书信。

第三篇共分两章,为你介绍最先进的通讯方式:电子邮件,并介绍书写电子邮件的基本方法和展示一些范例。

第四篇包括三个附录。传真通讯为你介绍现时非常普遍的通讯模式;还有示范的履历表;以及按第二篇章详录的书信常用语。

写作商业书信时,本手册是你案头最有用的工具书。

第一篇 写作

Section 1 Good business letters

The following general guidelines will be useful when writing any kind of business letter.

- Be clear, brief and businesslike.
- Don't write confused, overlong or pointless letters.
- Be polite, friendly and informal.
- Don't be rude or patronizing.
- Write concise and purposeful letters.
- Don't try to write in a literary style.
- Write to communicate.
- Don't try to impress with your writing.

Keep your letters:

- *short*. Say only what you need to say. Use short words, sentences and paragraphs.
- *simple*. Decide what you want to communicate. Write confidently and naturally. Keep related parts of a sentence close together. Connect sentences so that the reader can follow the complete meaning of the letter without getting lost.
- *strong*. Use concrete words in preference to abstract words. Use active verbs in preference to passive verbs. Stress the main point of your letter.
- *sincere*. Write naturally and avoid old-fashioned language.

Organizing letters

All letters should follow the same pattern, making clear:

- *purpose*. The first paragraph states the purpose of the letter: what the letter is about.
- *circumstances*. The next paragraph or paragraphs explain the circumstances that prompted the letter.
- *action*. The final paragraph or paragraphs explain what action should be taken. They can contain a request, give permission, refuse permission, approve or disapprove of an action.

To keep the letter clear and completely readable:

- don't put more than one idea in a sentence;
- don't put more than one topic in a paragraph;
- don't put more than one subject in a letter.

Be natural, human and sympathetic.

- Think about the reader. Put yourself in the reader's place. Which words, phrases and paragraphs will get the reaction you want?
- Don't try to intimidate the reader: this will make the reader angry and the purpose of the letter will not be achieved.
- Write short, businesslike letters which appeal to the reader's self-interest and sense of fairness.

第一章 规范的商业书信

以下的写作要点, 可应用于任何类型的商业书信:

- 要明了、简短、务实。
- 内容应避免混乱、冗长或空洞。
- 要客气、友好和不拘形式。
- 不要言辞粗鲁或盛气凌人。
- 要简明和言之有物。
- 不要以文学体裁写信。
- 要传达信息。
- 不要哗众取宠。

书信应:

- 短小。只说非说不可的话。用短语、短句和短段落。
- 简明。确定传达的内容, 行文要自然流畅, 句子结构紧密和有联系, 以便读者能领会信中的所有信息。
- 有说服力。使用的词句要具体, 不要抽象。用主动句, 不用被动句, 着重强调信中的中心思想。
- 诚恳。信要写得自然, 避免使用陈旧的语言。

书信内容的组织

所有书信都应遵照相同的格式, 并将以下各点表达清楚:

- 目的。第一段说明信的目的和作用。
- 情况。第二段或以下各段说明促使写这封信的原因。
- 行动。最后一段或几段说明应该采取的行动。其中包括请求、允准、拒绝允准、同意或不同意某一行动。

要信件清楚和容易看懂:

- 一个句子只表达一个意思;
- 一个段落只表达一个话题;
- 一封信只表达一个主题。

信件要自然、通情达理:

- 要照顾读者。设身处地为读者着想。什么词句、用语和段落将获得你预期的反应?
- 切莫试图威胁读者, 这样做会激怒读者, 也就达不到写信的目的。
- 书信内容要公平和符合读者自身利益, 并应简短而务实。

Style

The appearance of your letters is important. They should:

- be accurate;
- be neat;
- follow one of the basic styles—full-block, block, semiblock, official.

Examples of each style are given below.

Full-block

26 June 1997

Mr James Brown
Sales Director
Electra plc
5 North Way
United Industrial Estate
Manchester
MA2 3BA
UK

Dear Mr Brown,

The full-block style has no indentations. Everything is ranged left. This saves a certain amount of typing time. As you can see, there is no punctuation in the address or the signature.

This style is widely used today because it is efficient and reflects the dynamic approach we now take in business. Its appearance is also quite pleasing.

Yours sincerely,
James Watt

James Watt
Sales Manager

中文书信的格式

书信的格式运用恰当，能方便收信人阅读，避免费时误事。

- 述事要明确；
- 层次要分明；
- 参照下列任何一种常见的格式书写：便函式、私函式、现代式和新型通用式。

各种格式举例如下：

中文书信便函式的格式

Mr James Brown
Sales Director
Electra plc
5 North Way
United Industrial Estate
Manchester
MA2 3BA
UK

敬启者：便函式是至今民间最常用的格式。

这种格式不设编号和标题。起首常用“敬启者”、“敬复者”之类的启事敬辞，然后承接开首应酬语。主要内容和收结应酬语分别另行顶格书写。承接收结应酬语写“此致”或“此复”，另起行顶格写收信人名称。

信末附上发信人署名、“谨上”、“敬约”等启事敬辞和日期。此致

布朗先生

销售经理

James Watt
詹姆斯·瓦特谨启

1997年6月26日

中文书信私函式的格式

Block

1 April 1997

Ms Mary Green
Head Designer
Elite Fashions Ltd
64B Cloth Lane
Nottingham
NG5 4GS
UK

Dear Ms Green,

This is probably the most popular letter style. The date is ranged right but the address and the body of the letter are ranged left, without indentations, as in full-block style. Again, as in the full-block style, there is no punctuation in the address.

The close is placed a little to the right of centre with the signature aligned beneath it.

Yours sincerely,
Patricia Rose

Patricia Rose

Ms Mary Green
Head Designer
Elite Fashions Ltd
64B Cloth Lane
Nottingham
NG5 4GS
UK

格林女士:

私函式不加编号和标题。开首顶格写收信人名称, 开首应酬语、主要内容和收结应酬语分别另起行空两格写。信末则是发信人署名、启告敬辞和日期。

Patricia Rose

帕特里夏·罗斯敬复

1997年4月1日

中文书信现代式的格式

Semiblock

21 March 1996

Mrs Ann Gray
Head Buyer
Oriental Foods Inc
San Diego
California
90239
USA

Dear Mrs Gray,

This is semiblock style. Many people prefer it because of its balanced appearance.

The paragraphs are indented five to ten spaces. As in the block style, the date is ranged right. The close is to the right of centre and the signature is aligned beneath it. There is again no punctuation in the address.

Yours sincerely,
Roger Duncan

Roger Duncan

Mrs Ann Gray
Head Buyer
Oriental Foods Inc
San Diego
California
90239
USA

关于现代式书函的格式 书信格式第三号

格雷太太:

现代式是从私函式演变而来的。大体上两者格式相同,但现代式要加上标题和编号。

中国大陆的公文亦常用这种行文格式。

Roger Duncan
罗杰·邓肯谨复

1996年3月21日

Official

6 August 1997

Dear Mr Edwards,

Official style is often used on headed stationery which bears the company logo. The main difference between this style and the others is that the address of the recipient appears below the main body of the letter rather than above it.

Paragraphs are indented and the close is aligned with the date above and the signature below it. The recipient and his or her address are placed two lines below the signature and ranged left, without punctuation.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Jones
Managing Director

Mr James Edwards
Manager
Space Engineering Ltd
67 London Road
Derby
DR10 2QR
UK

中文书信新型通用式的格式

(发信人编号)

Mr James Edwards
Manager
Space Engineering Ltd
67 London Road
Derby
DR10 2QR
UK

(收信人编号)

(发信人地址)

1997年8月6日

关于新型通用式书函的格式

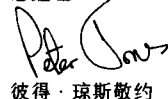
爱德华兹先生:

新型通用式集中了中外各种书函格式的习惯和长处, 切合现代化办公室运作的需要, 成为现今通用的书函式。

这格式最大优点在于各项目齐备, 编排位置明确, 发信人可依具体需要, 减省不必要的项目, 而不会遗漏重要资料。

发信人和收信人编号置于顶端, 其下分别是发信人和收信人地址, 如发信人地址已印在信纸上, 则不必重复。下行靠右是日期, 信件标题则放在下行中间位置。除日期外, 标题以下各项目的编排次序和私函式没有两样。

总经理



彼得·琼斯敬约

Checklist

To check how effective your letters are, you might use the following list.

The reader

- Who am I writing to?
- What does the recipient want?
- Do I have the correct name and title of the recipient?
- Is the company address correct?
- Have I read all the recent correspondence with the recipient?
- Do I need more information about the recipient and his or her company? If so, where can I get it?

核查细目表

要核对书信是否合格有效, 可以使用下列核查细目表。

读者

- 收信人是谁?
- 收信人需要什么?
- 收信人的姓名和头衔是什么?
- 公司的地址是否正确?
- 有没有翻查最近与收信人的通讯?
- 是否需要更多收信人及其公司的资料? 能从哪里得到?

The letter

- Am I the right person to write this letter?
- Should I use 'I' or 'we'?
- Should anyone read this letter before I send it?
- Who should get copies?
- Have I got all the information I need to write the letter?
- Should I write a rough draft before dictating the letter?
- Should I show the rough draft to anyone before dictating the letter?
- Does the letter involve any expenditure? If so, do I need to get competitive tenders and approval?
- Be polite, friendly and informal.
- Don't be rude or patronizing.
- Write concisely and purposefully.
- Write to communicate.
- Don't try to write in a literary style.
- Don't try to impress with your writing.

Evaluation

Examine your letters critically. Ask yourself:

- Does the letter achieve its aim?
- Is the letter friendly and polite?
- Would other people in my organization approve of the letter?
- Does the letter reflect well on the company?

信函

- 我是否写这封信的合适人选?
- 应该使用“我”还是“我们”?
- 在寄出这封信以前应否请人过目?
- 谁应得到副本?
- 写这封信的全部资料齐备吗?
- 应否先写下初稿?
- 应否先将初稿请人过目?
- 这封信是否涉及某项开支? 是否需要投标和得到上级批准?
- 要有礼貌、友好、不拘形式。
- 不要粗鲁或傲慢。
- 要写得简明和言之有物。
- 要传达信息。
- 不要以文学体裁写信。
- 不要哗众取宠。

评估

审慎地检查书信。问一问:

- 这封信能否达到其目的?
- 这封信是否友好和有礼貌?
- 机构中的其他人是否同意这封信的立场?
- 这封信是否给公司带来好的影响?

Section 2 Reports

Types of report

There are many different kinds of report. Here are some of the basic types.

Periodic reports

These are submitted at regular intervals. They provide information on the status of an organization.

Progress reports

These provide information about projects or activities concerning sales, profit margins, stocks, etc.

Research reports

These can be about any area affecting the company, such as market research, new products, competition and so on.

Recommendation reports

These are the bases for decisions and action: whether to introduce a new product, relocate the company, make a new investment, etc.

Examination reports

These contain data such as financial information, the condition of plant, the value of stocks.

A checklist before writing a report

- What is the purpose of the report?
- Is a written report really needed?
- What will be the result if the report's recommendations are accepted?
- Who will read the report?

Steps in report writing

Preparation

Use the checklist to decide whether the report is really needed. Then think about the contents of the report.

Research

Check all the available sources: files, records, reports, brochures, catalogues, etc.

Consult other people in your company for advice, information and suggestions.

Put your notes on small file cards. These make organization of the material easier.

第二章 报告

报告的种类

报告有许多种类，以下是一些基本的式样。

定期报告

这些报告每隔一定时间提交，提供关于某机构的资料。

进展情况报告

这些报告提供关于某项目或销售、最低利润和库存等资料。

研究报告

这类报告涉及对公司有影响的任何领域，如市场研究、新产品、竞争等等。

建议报告

这类报告是决策和行动的基础，如是否引进新产品、迁移公司、进行新投资等等。

调查报告

这类报告包括诸如金融信息、设备状况、库存价值等资料。

写报告前需核查的细目

- 报告的目的是甚么？
- 是否确实需要书面报告？
- 如果报告中的建议被接受，会有什么结果？
- 谁将阅读这份报告？

写报告的步骤

准备

。再考虑报告的内容。

研究

检查所有获得的资料来源：文件、记录、报告、小册子、各种目录等。

向公司的其他人员征询意见和建议，取得有关的资料。

在小卡片上记下重点，使材料的组织更容易。

Organization

Present your information in a logical sequence. You might find the following method very useful.

- Write your notes on cards, one point to a card.
- Divide the cards into piles, one pile for each group of related points.
- Arrange your piles of points in a logical sequence.
- Within each pile, arrange the points in a logical order.

The above method will provide the outline. All you need to add are an introduction and a conclusion.

Putting the report on paper

Using your cards, write the report without stopping to check style or choice of words. Do not look for missing facts: leave blanks. You can do all these things at the revision stage.

Revision/editing

The following hints apply to letter writing as much as to report writing.

Revision is an important step in report writing so that mistakes can be corrected and missing information may be added. If necessary, the order of presentation may also be changed at this point.

Here are some thoughts to consider when revising a first draft.

- Avoid being abstract. Write about people, things and facts.
- Write the way you talk.
- Don't be afraid of using 'I'.
- Quote what people have told you.
- Quote what you read.
- Put yourself in the reader's place: make your writing easy to read, simple and direct.
- Anticipate questions and give the answers.
- Be brief but not too brief: make sure you include all necessary facts and explanations.
- Plan a beginning, middle and end.
- Check names, titles and positions carefully.
- Use pronouns (he, she, they) rather than repeating names.
- Try to use active verbs: 'I recommend' rather than 'It is recommended'.
- Avoid jargon, especially if people who are not familiar with the jargon will read your report.
- Be specific: use illustrations and examples.
- Keep your sentences short.
- Keep your paragraphs short.
- Use simple language.
- Use simple words whenever possible.

组织

把资料按逻辑顺序整理好, 下列方法非常有用。

- 把重点写在卡片上, 一张卡片记一个重点。
- 把卡片分类, 每一组有关的重点为一沓。
- 把各沓要点按逻辑顺序整理好。
- 把每一沓中的要点按逻辑顺序整理好。

上述方法提供的只是大纲, 需要加上前言和结论才算完整。

将报告成文

使用卡片撰写报告时不必停下来核查体裁或挑选字词。不用寻找遗缺的资料, 只需留下空间。这些事情可以在校阅阶段时做。

校阅

下列须知适用于写报告和信函。

在写报告时, 为了纠正错误和补充遗缺的信息, 校阅是一个重要步骤。必要时亦可改变陈述的方式。

校阅一篇初稿时要考虑到下列重点。

- 避免空谈。要写人、物和事实。
- 怎么说就怎么写。
- 需要时可用“我”。
- 把别人告诉你的话用引号括起来。
- 把你读到的东西用引号括起来。
- 设身处地为读者着想, 令信件更易读、简洁和直截了当。
- 假设出问题并作出回答。
- 要精简但不要太短小, 要确保所有必要的事实和说明都包括进去。
- 策划前言、内文和结尾。
- 要小心核对人名、头衔和职位。
- 用代名词(他、她、他们)而不要重复人名。
- 要说“我建议”, 而不要说“有人建议”。
- 避免行话, 尤其当读你报告的人并不熟悉行话时。
- 用图表和例子明确表达意思。
- 使用短句子。
- 使用短段落。
- 使用简洁的语言。
- 尽可能使用简单的字和词。

Part Two

Model letters

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2.1.1 A request to establish business relations

Useful phrases

Line 1

We have obtained your name and address from ...

Line 1

... we are writing to enquire ...

Line 4

We would appreciate your catalogues and quotations.

Line 8

We look forward to your early reply.

Notes

Para. 1

Explain how you got the recipient's address, and state the main purpose of the letter.

Para. 2

Add a few details about yourself and what you require.

Para. 3

Give the recipient an incentive to reply.

Para. 4

Encourage a prompt reply.



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Fashions**

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16 August 1995

Moda Shoes
Boulevard Haussman
Paris
France

Dear Sirs,

We have obtained your name and address from Aristo Shoes, Milan, and we are writing to enquire whether you would be willing to establish business relations with us.

We have been importers of shoes for many years. At present, we are interested in extending our range and would appreciate your catalogues and quotations.

If your prices are competitive we would expect to transact a significant volume of business.

We look forward to your early reply.

Yours faithfully,

Angelo Bonetti
Chief Buyer

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8

Comments

The letter is brief and to the point. It says enough to interest the recipient and encourage a prompt reply. More detailed negotiations will follow.

Alternative phrases

Line 1 Our attention has been drawn to your ...

Line 1 We would like to know whether ...

Line 4 Our company is considering to extend our range ...

Line 6 If your prices are reasonable ...

Line 6 ... a great volume of business.

14 Part 2 Section 1