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International

B

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随着全球经济一体化和中国经济的快速发展,中国对外商务合作的前景日益广阔。中国企业为了寻求更好的发展空间和机遇,纷纷到世界各地投资建厂以获最大利益;与此同时,许多国际知名企业和跨国公司先后在中国各地投资。中国已经成为全球经济、贸易、商务、技术合作和投资的热点地区。在这种商务格局的大背景下,商贸活动已成为经济活动中一个非常关键的环节。然而由于距离的限制,面对面的商务交流往往费时费力,因此如何在适当的场合运用准确的语言,用各种各样的书面形式向对方表达商业意图成为维持商务关系,确保商业成功的重要因素。

为满足各大专院校复合型外语人才培养以及社会上各阶层商务工作者的需要,我们特编写了《国际商务英语函电》一书。本书科学地将国际贸易知识、商务技能与英语语言综合能力融为一体,目的在于帮助更多的学习者通过系统地对外贸易函电的学习,掌握外贸实务的基本理论知识,熟悉各种各样的函电格式和常用句型,了解不同商务活动的人文背景以及具体操作规范及程序,从而提高对外贸易往来的业务能力。

本书分为 15 章,涉及利用函电进行交易磋商的主要方面包括商业书信的撰写、商务关系的建立、询盘与答复、发盘与还盘、接受预订单、信用证的开立与修改、支付包装与运输、保险与仲裁、投诉与索赔以及电子信函等。每一单元由以下几个部分构成:

1. 学习重点。简单地概括出各章的知识要点、重点和难点,让学生有目的的去学习,也给自学者提供了自学纲要。
2. 专业知识概述。该部分用英语介绍了相关的国际贸易理论知识,对所涉及的实务内容也作了较详细的说明和分析。
3. 样信展示。函电类书籍历来的重点都是各种信函的格式内容以及相应的常用词汇和语言,所以该部分结合理论的讲解,提供了相应的样信展示。本书所选样信大多是最近几年一些外贸公司业务往来的信函,不仅语言新,而且选材力求与章节内容有关,具有较强的实践指导意义。

4. 词汇句法注解。本部分内容涉及样信文中的重点词汇和句法,均给出了详细的解释和相应的实例,以加强学生的语言应用能力。

5. 常用句型。常用句型是对涉及各章信函内容的常见句型进行总结,以供学生背诵、借鉴和使用,拓展学生灵活应用语言的能力。

6. 课后练习。练习题的设计从简单到复杂,紧密结合各章节的学习重点,并辅以参考答案,供学生参考。

7. 案例评述。本部分主要是对各章节内容进行扩展,对外贸实务部分的内容提供了最新的外贸业务素材供学生讨论,以扩大学生的知识面,加深理解。

本书作者在多年教学和在外贸企业调研的基础上,借鉴国内外最新教材编写理念和教学方法,结合高等院校教学的特点以及复合型人才培养的具体需要,在以下方面进行了尝试:

1. 本教材在介绍各类信函的同时详细讲解了相关的理论知识,帮助初学者及没有专门学习过国际贸易的学习者通过理论联系实际的方式准确地认知所学知识。

2. 每章的常用句型总结部分给学习者提供了大量的外贸语言素材,能帮助学习者更好地理解各章节的专业英语语言知识;形式多样的练习可以有效地帮助学习者提高实际运用能力。

本书可供高等院校英语专业和商务英语专业学生作为复合型专业英语教材使用,亦可供国际贸易、国际营销和国际商务专业高年级本专科生作为双语教材使用。本教材对于从事对外经贸进出口业务的从业人员也具有较高的借鉴价值。同时本教材也可作为有志于从事国际商务活动的英语爱好者自学使用。

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由于编者水平有限，书中不足之处在所难免，敬请国内外专家、学者和广大读者批评指正。

编者

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Chapter 1

Business Letter Writing

Learning Focus

After the completion of this chapter, you will be able to:

- ☞ grasp layout of business letters;
- ☞ learn how to address envelopes;
- ☞ be familiar with styles of letters.

All the transactions depend on exchange of information. In modern international business, information is of dominant significance, and its exchange can be made in various methods either in speaking or in writing. As written forms can secure complete understanding between the parties involved, they stand as a permanent record of each transaction. There are many types of written communication, including letters, memos, reports, telegrams, telexes, etc. Business letters are the principle means used by firms or companies to keep in touch with their customers. They are sent to ask for or to convey information, to make or accept an offer, to deal with matters concerning negation of business and so on. Foreign trade personnel should not only understand but also be good at business letters.

Section I Layout of Business Letters

Letters must be clear, coherent and well-organized. While writing a business letter, you need to follow the conventional, established format or layout.

1. Essentials of Business Letters

Normally a business letter comprises seven principal parts: the letter-head (heading), date, inside address, the salutation, the body, complimentary close, and signature. Each of these parts has a special form depending on the type of the letter. Occasionally, a letter may also include some special parts.

(1) Letter-head

Letter-heads include the essential particulars about the writer—his name and postal address, his telephone number, his telegraphic and telex addresses, the fax number and telegraphic codes used and even his website. Good quality paper and a neat, well-organized letter-head combine to enhance the prestige of the firm that uses them.

(2) Date

The date should be typed three or four line spaces below the letter-head and in the indented form of layout, so placed to the right that the last figure serves as a guide for line-endings in the body of the letter. Though other placements are now accepted, it should always be typed in full and never abbreviated. Never give the date in figures such as 18/7/2002; it could easily be confusing.

Whether commas or full stops are used in dates is accepted as a matter of taste, but the inclusion of a comma after the month with no full stop after the year is now customary. For example,

18th July, 2002 (British style)

July 18, 1986 (American style)

(3) Inside Name and Address

The preferred position for the correspondent's name and address is the upper left-hand side of the sheet, three or more line spaces below the line of the date, depending on the length of the letter. However, in official (i.e. government) correspondence, it is sometimes placed at the foot, in the bottom left-hand corner. Where the appropriate head of department is known, address the letter to him by his official title. For example,

The Sales Manager
The Hercules Engineering Co., Ltd.
Brazennose Street
Manchester M526 BD
England

When addressing a correspondent personally by name, take care to spell the name correctly. English address may have the following parts (not all addresses have all the parts):

- name of the house;
- number of the house and name of the street;
- name of the city or the town;
- name of the county or state and its post code;

- name of the country.

In order to avoid ambiguity, when you write letters to other countries, always include the name of the country, even if the city mentioned is the capital of the country, because there are some unknown cities with the same name as the popular cities. Here is an example.

The Vice President
The Eagle Press Inc.
24 South Bank
Birmingham
Alabama
USA

(4) Salutation

The salutation is the greeting with which every letter begins. The customary greeting in a business letter is “Dear Sir” or “Dear Sirs” (when a partnership is addressed). But the Americans usually use “Gentlemen” instead of “Dear Sirs”. Note that you cannot use “Sirs” alone and that “Gentlemen” cannot be used in the singular. In American letters a colon is always placed after the salutation, while in British letter a comma is done such as:

Dear Mr. White: (American style)
Dear Mrs. Green, (British style)

Quite often now companies are owned and/or managed by women, and it is more and more customary to use the greeting “Dear Madam” or “Dear Sir”, if the writer is not sure whether the letter will be read by a man or a woman.

(5) Message

This forms the body of the letter and is the part that really matters. Before you begin to write, you must first of all consider the following two points.

- What is your aim in writing this letter?
- What is the best way to go about it?

Since the main purpose of the letter is to convey a message, the letter should be written in language that is easily understood. The following serves as reminders.

- Write simply, clearly, courteously, grammatically and to the point;
- Paragraph correctly, confining each paragraph to one topic;
- Avoid stereotyped phrases and commercial jargon.

For very short letters you may adopt double line spaces except for your correspondent's name and address for which a single line space should always be used.