实用商务英语写作

Practical English Writing for Business

安 然　孙继红　编著

- 职场必备
- 成功秘籍
- 全程指导
- 商业助理

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·北京·

内容简介

本书将求职写作、日常办公写作、商务报告、合同协议、商务社交信函、外贸函电、电子沟通等各种可能遇到的国际商务写作任务全面融合，既介绍写作理论知识、业务技巧，又提供例证；书中总结出标准模式、范文、常用词汇和句型，并配有很有操作性的技巧训练，同时编入合同及各种单证。

本书可作为大专院校相关专业商务英语写作教材，也可作为从事商贸工作人员的参考用书及商务英语等级考试的指导用书。

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前 言

中国经济的全球化使得中外商贸活动日益频繁，以英语作为载体的商务沟通，在商务活动中发挥着重要作用。国际商务的新发展，也对国际商务人才提出新要求，即急需具有商务写作能力的高素质应用型人才。然而从我们对毕业生和从业人员的调查发现，他们大多缺乏这方面能力。其原因一方面在于相关人员教授或学习方法不对，另一方面也因为缺乏合适的指导性教材。目前市场上的教材往往将商务写作内容割裂开来，只针对外贸函电或商务书信等研究，而没有英文商务写作完整的介绍，使读者缺乏全面认识和掌握；有的教材片面注重提供范文和例句，对于写作方法和商务活动背景很少介绍，使读者不能灵活、准确地应用写作进行商务沟通；有的教材内容陈腐，误导了读者；有的教材只重语言研究，而不能将内容和实际工作需要结合，学生学习后，还是不知道具体工作时如何使用。于是，针对现有教材的不理想状况，我们决定编写这本书。

本教材将求职写作、日常办公写作、商务报告、合同协议、商务社交信函、外贸函电、电子沟通等各种可能遇到的国际商务写作任务全面融合，内容设置系统、实用、创新；既介绍写作理论知识、业务技巧，又提供例证，充分贯彻了理论和实践紧密结合的原则，全面提升写作水平。书中总结出标准模式、范文、常用词汇和句型，行文现代、先进，有代表性；并配有操作性强的技巧训练，巩固写作技能；同时编入合同及各种单证，还附有常用商务英语词汇，将训练基础英语技能和商务工作有机结合起来。

本教材共十章。第一章是商务写作的基本原则，主要阐述有效商务写作的标准，如何构建清楚的句子和段落，以实现成功的写作。第二章求职英文写作，从其重要性开始论述，并根据西方实际，分别给予了简历、求职信和跟进的致谢信的写作指导和例文。第三章是日常办公公文，首先从理论上对便函、时间表、通知和海报、证明信、介绍信、便条和账单的写作方法加以阐述，然后提供实例。第四章报告写作，介绍了写作步骤、要素，并具体分析了较短的非正式报告和正式的长篇报告。第五章对比分析了合同和协议，介绍了撰写方法。第六章和第七章是商务社交信函，首先阐述了规范格式和风格，之后具体论述邀请函、道歉信、感谢信、卡片、表扬信、恭贺信、慰问信和推荐信的写作方法。第八章和第九章论述了外贸函电，根据实际业务顺序分别介绍了建立商务关系；询盘、发盘、还盘、接受订单和谢绝订单、包装、运输、支付方式、保

险、投诉和索赔的写法。第十章是有关电子商务写作。

本书可作为大专院校相关专业商务英语写作教材,还可作为从事国际商贸工作人员的参考用书及商务英语等级考试的指导用书。

由于作者水平有限,书中难免有疏漏和不足之处,恳请广大读者及专家提出批评和指正。

编 者
2008年3月

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Chapter One

An Introduction to Business Writing

1.1 An Overview of Business Writing

Written applications must be made to fill staff vacancies. Every business produces paperwork. A prospective business needs to convey various kinds of business information to its employees, clients, trading partners and funding bodies in order to operate the business and to promote products and services. Business writing serves to pass on information, to express ideas, to exchange feelings and to deal with social business.

Successful (Good) Business Communication can realize two goals, i.e., the receiver interprets the message as the sender intended it; it achieves the sender's purposes. At every stage, fluent, error-free writing can give a big advantage. Good writing will be used in different contexts to develop businessmen or to expand the business. Therefore, it is necessary for people who engage in foreign affairs to have a good command of the linguistic features and writing techniques in practical English writing.

1.2 Criteria for Effective Business Writing

Effective writing for business must comply with seven criteria, to be considerate, clear, concise, concrete, correct, complete and curtest. It should realize three functions: to inform; to influence; to entertain.

1.2.1 Consideration

The interrelationship between the sender and receiver profoundly affects communicative effectiveness. Consideration means that the writer prepares the writing with the readers in mind. You should take the following into consideration:

(1) Identify the audience. Determine the size and composition of the audience.

(2) Analyze the audience's desires, problem, circumstance, emotions.

(3) Analyze the audience's possible reaction.

(4) Determine the audience's level of understanding.

(5) Analyze the audience's needs. (informational, motivational, emotional, practical needs)

To indicate you are considerate, you can use the following:

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1. Focus on "You" Instead of "I" and "We"

Your readers are usually more concerned about themselves than about you. They are more interested in your writing when they see the pronoun "you" rather than "I, we". You-Viewpoint is a technique for building goodwill in letters. It involves being friendly and treating people in the way that they like to be treated.

1) "I" or "We" Oriented

I am happy to tell you...

We are pleased to have your new account.

We make Willet razor in three weights-light, medium and heavy.

We have shipped the two dozen Crown desk sets you ordered.

We require that you sigh the sales slip before we will charge to your account.

2) "You" Viewpoint

You will be happy to know...

Your new charge account is now open for your convenience.

Willett makes razors for you in three weights—light, medium and heavy.

Your two dozen desk sets should reach you with this letter.

For your protection, you are charged only after you have signed the sales slip.

2. Make Your Writing Interesting and Beneficial to Your Readers

Whenever possible, show your readers what benefits they will get from your writing. They will be more likely to respond favorably and do according to your suggestions if they see that the benefits are worth the effort and cost, for example:

To emphasize the positive means stressing what can be done instead of what cannot be done and focusing on ideas your readers can view favorably. By making clear what you call or will do, you often indirectly make clear what you cannot do without using a single negative word, for example:

(1) "We allow 2 percent discount for cash payment. We won't be able to send you the brochure this month." (Worse)

(2) "You earn 2% discount when you pay cash. We will send you the brochure next month." (Better)

3. Apply Integrity and Ethics

To be truly considerate, you need also apply integrity—high moral standards, personal honor, truthfulness, sincerity—to your writing. Ethics is concerned with what is right human conduct. Codes of ethics provide standards enabling us to determine the fundamental distinction between right or wrong human behavior. An honest business person needs a strong conscience as well as knowledge of communication principles. There are also some other requirements leading to successful business writing, in addition to the essential ones mentioned above which are unique to business writing to some extent. When these requirements are reached, they can help you express your ideas clearly and persuasively.

1.2.2 Clarity

Clarity means your purpose and the words are clear to your readers so that the receivers can interpret your words with the same meaning you have in mind. But it is difficult for you to accomplish the goal because individual experiences are never identical and each person's mind is a unique filter.

Here are some suggestions to help make your messages clear:

1. Choose Proper, Short and Familiar Words

Choose proper words to make the messages easy to understand, e.g.:

(1) As to the steamers sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco, we have bimonthly direct services. (Worse)

We have two direct sailings every month from Hong Kong to San Francisco. (Better)

(2) We have semimonthly direct sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco. (Better)

(3) We have a direct sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco. (Better)

Choose short and familiar words to make the messages easy to understand, e.g.: better say "after", "use", "show", instead of "subsequently", "utilize", "disclose".

2. Make Idea Clear

Put one idea in a sentence, put one topic in a paragraph, and put one subject in a letter.

3. Use Short Sentences

Short sentences lead to clear meaning and easy understanding. The average sentence length is about 17 – 20 words. You can use sentences containing 3 – 40 words. If there are more than 40 or 50 words in a sentence. You can consider rewriting it into more than one sentence.

4. Have Paragraphs of Suitable Length

In business writing, it is suitable for paragraphs to contain 7 – 8 lines. If a paragraph is too long, it may make the main idea unclear and lead to a loose structure. If a paragraph is too short, your reader may be impressed that your topic is not adequately supported.

1.2.3 Conciseness

Conciseness means to write the fewest possible words without sacrificing completeness and courtesy. A concise message saves time and expense for both sender and receiver. Conciseness contributes to emphasis. By eliminating unnecessary words, you help make important ideas stand out. To achieve conciseness, try to observe the following suggestions:

1. Shorten or Omit Words or Expressions

As few words as possible should be used to give complete, and clear meanings. If possible, a word should be used instead of a phrase, a phrase instead of a clause, a clause instead of a sentence, and a sentence instead of a paragraph.

1) Avoid Cluttering Phrases

Cluttering Phrases	**Shorter Substitutions**
at the present time	now
for the purpose of	for
for the reason that	since, because
in the near future	soon
in view of the fact that	since, because
prior to the start	before
a draft in the amount of $ 1000-	a draft for $ 1000

2) Eliminate Surplus Words

With Surplus Words	**Eliminate Surplus Words**
There are five rules that should be observed.	Five rules should be observed.
In the period between June and August they found the error.	Between June and August they found the error.
His performance was good enough to enable him to qualify for the promotion.	His performance was good enough to qualify for the promotion.
It came at a time when we were busy.	It came when we were busy.
Leather depreciates in value slowly.	Leather depreciates slowly.
We will ship these shoes at a later date.	We will ship these shoes later.
As a matter of interest, I am interested in learning your plan.	I am interested in learning your plan.

However, the process of condensing should not be carried so far that the message becomes general and loses its original meaning.

2. Include Only Relevant Facts

The effective concise message should omit not only unnecessary wordy expressions but also irrelevant material. To make sure you include only relevant facts, you should, first, stick to the purpose of your writing; second, omit information obvious to your reader; third, avoid unnecessary background material or explanations, excessive adjectives, pompous words, and gushy politeness.

3. Avoid Unnecessary Repetition

Sometimes repetition is necessary for emphasis. But if the same thing is said several times without reason, the message be comes boring. The following are three ways to prevent unnecessary repetition: First, use a shorter name after you have mentioned the long one once. For example, use “China Telecom” to indicate “China Telecommunications Company” when the latter one has been mentioned before. Second, use pronouns and initials rather than repeating long names. For instance, instead of "First Automobile Works" again and again. use "it" or "FAW ". Third, get rid of all needless repetition of phrases and sentences.

1.2.4 Concreteness

The writing should be specific, definite and vivid rather than vague, general and abstract.

Abstract	**Concrete**
a significant loss	a 53 percent loss
in the near future	by Thursday noon
light in weight	feather light
the majority	70 percent

1.2.5 Correctness

Business writing should be correct in grammar, punctuation, spelling, information, figures, etc.

Wrong Sentences	**Correct Sentences**
My research report in business communication took a long time to prepare. And turned out badly.	My research report in business communication took a long time to prepare and then turned out badly. (Fragment)
Profits were down in 1998, the Board blamed the recession.	Profits were down in 1998. The Board blamed the recession. (Comma splice)
Employees want to keep their jobs they will work hard for promotions.	Employees want to keep their jobs. They will work hard for promotions. (Run-on sentence)

1.2.6 Completeness

Your business writing is complete when it contains all the necessary information and data the reader needs. An incomplete message may result in increased communication costs, loss of goodwill, sales, and valued customers, cost of returning goods, and wasted time.

Keeping the following guidelines in mind will help you achieve completeness:

1. Make All Points Detailed

Evidence must be precisely stated. The significance of the facts in relation to the problem must be shown. The treatment of each section of the article must be complete or the reader may misunderstand that particular section. The analysis is a basis for the conclusions, and the conclusions are a basis for the recommendations.

2. Answer All Questions Asked

If you need to reply to an inquiry containing one or more questions, answer all questions clearly stated and implied. If you have no information on a particular question, you must say so clearly, instead of omitting an answer. If you have unfavorable information in answer one or more questions, handle our reply tactfully.

1.2.7 Courtesy

Business writing should be polite, sincere, tactful, thoughtful and appreciative

1. Singling Out Your Reader

Letters that appear to be written for one reader tend to make the reader feel important and appreciated. To single out your reader in a letter, you should write for his particular situation, e.g.:

We look forward to hearing from you. (Worse)

We look forward to the possibility of sending our executives to you in the years ahead. (Better)

2. Using the Reader's Names

Using the reader's names makes him or her feel important, e.g.:

"Mrs. Wilson, you haven't used your charge account in the last six months, and we are getting concerned about you. Will you do us a favor? Write and tell us what happened or, better still, come in and let us serve you again."

3. Avoiding Anger (Sarcasm, Insults, and Exclamations)

Angry Words

We cannot understand your negligence.

We will not tolerate this condition.

Your careless attitude has caused us a loss in sales.

We have had it!

4. Response in Time

To response in time shows the courtesy, e.g.:

We have received with many thanks your letter of 20 May, and we take the pleasure of sending you our latest catalog. We wish to draw your attention to a special offer which we have made in it.

You will be particularly interested in a special offer on page 5 of the latest catalog enclosed, which you requested in your letter of 20 May.

1.3 Construction of Effective Sentences and Paragraphs

Effective sentence and paragraph construction is vital both in terms of making writing easy to understand and helping us control the pace and impact of the writing.

1.3.1 Construction of Effective Sentences

You will be able to construct clear sentences and paragraphs by emphasizing unity, coherence, conciseness, and emphasis as you pay attention to grammar, choice of words, and punctuations.

1. Unity

Unity demands that every word and phrase should be relevant to one idea, and help produce one desired effect. In other words, a sentence cannot contain two parts that express two different ideas.

For example:

(1) Helen Keller wrote a total of eleven books, authored numerous articles and died in 1968.

There is no error in (1) except that it lacks unity because the two coordinated clauses are unrelated to each other. The sentence can be improved in either of the following ways:

(2) Helen Keller wrote a total of eleven books, and authored numerous articles. She died in 1968.

(3) Helen Keller, who wrote a total of eleven books, and authored numerous articles, died in 1968.

In Example (2), the two sentences each expresses one idea. In Example (3), the main clause expresses the main idea, and the attributive clause only serves to modify the subject. So in both cases, the unity principle is followed strictly.

Wordiness also violates the principle of unity. For example:

(1) There are many people who attended the conference.

(2) Many people attended the conference.

Sentence (1) is too wordy to destroy the unity. The revised (2) sentence without unnecessary words is better.

2. Coherence

Coherence influences the readers' perception of the writing. Sentences lead to readers' conviction only when the words are properly connected and their relationship is clear. Coherence is product of many different factors, which combine to make every sentence and every phrase contribute to the meaning of the whole piece. To achieve coherence, we can resort to parallelism and consistency in voice, mood and person.

1) Parallelism

Parallelism is for clarity and emphasis for a sentence. It can be achieved mainly by parallel constructions and g correlative conjunction.

Example for parallel constructions:

(1) I like having a cup of coffee and reading an interesting novel on Sunday.

(2) It is said that there is going to be a thunderstorm and that we'd better stay at home.

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