

应用型本科院校“十三五”规划教材

商务英语实训系列

A Coursebook of Business English  
Writing Training

# 商务英语写作 实训教程

主 编 刘俊兴 刘 娟

主 审 [澳] Michael Hobby



华南理工大学出版社  
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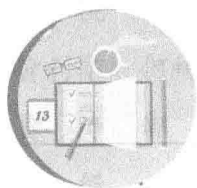
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主 编 刘俊兴 刘 娟

副主编 郭 莹 曾小峰 谢妙英

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主编 刘俊兴 刘娟

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# 商务英语实训系列教材

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# 前 言

《商务英语写作实训教程》(A Coursebook of Business English Writing Training) 由长期从事商务英语写作教学的教师和专家共同编写,旨在出版一本实用性强的商务英语写作实训教材。本教材既可以作为应用型本专科院校和职业院校商务英语专业教材,也可以供有一定英语基础、已经或将要在商贸领域从事涉外商务工作人员培训使用。

本教材主要是通过简单的写作知识简介和对典型样例的分析,使学习者掌握基本的商务英语写作知识和技能。对写作实训而言,除了要掌握各种体裁的写作特点和写作要求之外,更重要的是要使学习者了解商务活动的真实情景和实际内容,这样才能更好地体会写作的任务,才会知道具体的写作内容,也就是既要学会“如何写”,也要学会“写什么”。

本教材主要分为七个模块:第一模块主要是对现代商务写作原则和特点进行简单分析,重点是商务信函和电子邮件的写作;第二模块为商务办公文件和信函写作;第三模块为社交类信函写作;第四模块为进出口贸易主要环节内容写作;第五模块为跨境电商贸易沟通写作;第六模块为销售类信函写作;第七模块为短篇商务报告写作。

教材中每个模块根据具体内容分为多个单元。每个单元包含以下部分(Section):知识介绍(Background Knowledge)、案例分析(Sample Analysis)、写作任务(Tasks)。

“知识介绍”针对本单元写作体裁的写作特点、篇章结构以及写作技巧等方面进行简要分析,使学习者对本单元的写作知识有初步的了解。“案例分析”根据本单元内容提供多篇有代表性的范文,对范文的结构或写作特点等进行简要的分析,使学习者能进一步理解和掌握本单元的写作知识和技能。“写作任务”根据本单元的学习要求设计出不同的写作任务,让学习者能够通过实际的写作任务得到训练,达到实训的目的。

本教材在编写过程中,参考了许多国内外商务写作及贸易类的书籍和资料,并借鉴了相关的范文和练习,编者在书的最后均已列出,在此表示感谢。另外,特别感谢深圳贝希恩商贸有限公司提供的实训、学习机会,以及提供跨境电商贸易沟通写作的相关材料。

本教材的编写和出版还得到广东省高等院校专业建设综合改革项目支持,在此表示衷心的感谢。

由于编者水平有限,书中错误、不足之处在所难免,恳请读者批评指正。

编 者  
2017年10月



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# Module 1

## Business Writing Basics

商务写作是商务活动中重要的沟通方式之一。不论是公司内部的行政管理沟通，还是公司、企业间的贸易往来沟通，甚至政府间的关系沟通都离不开商务写作这种书面沟通方式。但在书面交流中，读者只能通过写作内容和写作方式对作者做出判断。因此，良好的写作能力有助于提高工作效率、提升可信度、改善关系以及赢得更多的客户。本章主要介绍商务英语写作的基础知识，包括商务信函的一般写作要求、写作原则，信函和信封的结构及行文要求，以及商务邮件的构成及写作原则。

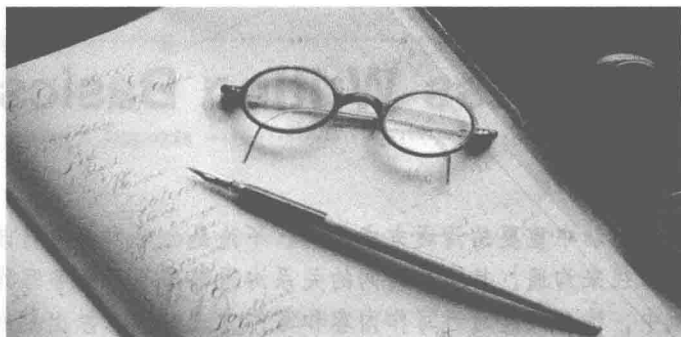
### *Learning Objectives*

- *To grasp some principles of modern business writing*
- *To study the layout of business letters and emails, including the styles and structures*
- *To learn how to organize business letters and emails*





# Unit 1 *Modern Business Writing*



## Warm-up

1. What should we pay attention to when communicating with foreigners?
2. How to organize an effective letter?

## Section 1 Background Knowledge

Writing is a part of every job. In fact, your first contact with a potential employer is through posting your résumé and writing a letter of application, which determine a company's first impression of you. And the higher you advance in an organization, the more writing you will do.

### **Nine Guidelines for Communicating with International Readers\***

The following nine guidelines will help you communicate more successfully with an international audience, significantly reducing the chances of their misunderstanding of you.

#### **1. Use common, easily understandable vocabulary**

Write basic, simplified English. Choose words that are widely understood and avoid low-frequency words by substituting simpler synonyms; for example, use *stop*, not *refrain*; *prevent*, not *forestall*; *discharge*, not *exude*.

#### **2. Avoid ambiguity**

Words that have double meanings force non-native readers to wonder which one you mean. For example, "We fired the engine" would baffle your readers if they were not aware of the multiple

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\* Philip C. Kolin. *Successful Writing at Work*. 4th Ed. Cambridge, MA: Wadsworth Publishing, 2014.

*meaning fire*. Unfamiliar with the context in which fire means “start up”, a non-native speaker of English might think you’re referring to “setting on fire or inflaming”, which is not what you intend.

### 3. Be careful about technical vocabulary

Make sure the technical word or phrase you include is widely known and not a word or meaning used only at your plant or office. Be especially careful about using business words and phrases an international reader may not know, such as “lean manufacturing” “revolving credit” and so forth.

### 4. Avoid idiomatic expressions

A non-native speaker of English might be shocked if you wrote about a sale concluded at a branch office this way: “Last week we made a killing in our office.” Substitute a clear, unambiguous translation easily understood in international English: “We made a big sale last week.”

### 5. Delete metaphors

Some metaphors, which are often rooted in American popular culture, do not translate word for word for non-native speakers and so again can interfere with communication with your reader, such as “dropped the ball” “beat the odd”.

### 6. Don’t use abbreviations, acronyms, or contractions

While some shortened forms of words and phrases are a part of your business culture, they might easily be misunderstood by a non-native speaker, such as pharm., hdg., mfg., even ASAP, PDQ, SSN and so on.

### 7. Be careful about units of measure

Do not fall into the cultural trap of assuming that your reader measures distances in miles and feet (instead of kilometers and meters as most of the world does). Always respect the monetary unit your reader uses. Adapt your message to the reader’s culture.

### 8. Avoid culture-bound descriptions of place and space

Be respectful of your reader’s cultural (and physical) environment. Thanksgiving is celebrated in the United States in November, but in Canada on the second Monday in October; elsewhere around the world it may not be a holiday at all.

### 9. Keep your sentences simple and easy to understand

Short, direct sentences will cause a reader whose native language is not English the least amount of trouble. A good rule of thumb is that the shorter and less complicated your sentences, the easier they will be for a reader to process.

## Organizing Letters\*

### 1. The pattern of business letters

- Purpose. The first part states the purpose of the letter; what the letter is about.
- Circumstances. The next part explains the circumstances that prompt the letter.

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\* Ron Holt, Deborah Grigor, Nick Sampson. *International Business Correspondence for All Occasions* [M]. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2011.

- Action. The final part explains what actions should be taken. They can contain a request, give permission, refuse permission, approve and disapprove of an action.

## 2. Keep your letter more 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.

## A Brief Guide to Paragraphs and Sentences \*

### Paragraphs

#### 1. Writing a well-developed paragraph

A paragraph is the basic building block for any piece of writing. It is a group of related sentences arranged in a logical order, supplying readers with detailed, appropriate information on a single important topic.

A paragraph expresses one central idea, with each sentence contributing to the overall meaning of that idea. The paragraph does that by means of a topic sentence, which states the central idea, and supporting information, which explains the topic sentence.

#### 2. Supplying a topic sentence

The topic sentence is the most important sentence in your paragraph. Carefully worded and restricted, it helps you to generate and control your information. An effective topic sentence also helps readers grasp your main idea quickly. As you draft your paragraphs, pay close attention to the following three guidelines: ① Make sure you provide a topic sentence; ② Put your topic sentence first; ③ Be sure your topic sentence is focused.

#### 3. Knowing the three characteristics of an effective paragraph

**Unity** A unified paragraph sticks to one topic without wandering. Every sentence and every detail supports, explains, or proves the central idea. A unified paragraph includes only relevant information and excludes unnecessary or irrelevant comments.

**Coherence** In a coherent paragraph all sentences flow smoothly and logically to and from each other like the links of a chain. Use the following three techniques to achieve coherence:

- Use transitional words and phrases;
- Use pronouns and demonstrative adjectives;
- Use parallel (coordinated) grammatical structures.

**Completeness** A complete paragraph provides readers with sufficient information to clarify, analyze, support, defend or prove the central idea expressed in the topic sentence. The readers will be satisfied if the writer has given necessary details.

### Sentences

#### 1. Constructing and punctuating sentences

The way you construct and punctuate your sentences can determine whether you have succeed or not in the world of work. Your sentences reveal a lot about you. They tell the readers how clearly

\* Philip C. Kolin. *Successful Writing at Work* [M]. Beijing: Post & Telecom Press, 2011.

or how poorly you can convey a message. And any message is only as effective and as thoughtful as the sentences of which it is made.

## 2. Avoiding sentence fragments

An incomplete sentence is called a fragment. Fragments can be phrases or dependent clauses. They either lack a verb or a subject or have broken away from an independent clause. A fragment is isolated: It needs an overhaul to supply missing parts to turn it into an independent clause or to glue it back to an independent clause to have it make sense. To avoid writing fragments, follow these rules:

- Do not use a subordinate clause as a sentence;
- Every sentence must have a subject telling the reader who carries out the action;
- Every sentence must have a complete verb;
- Do not detach prepositional phrases from independent clauses.

## 3. Avoiding comma splices

Fragments occur when you use only bits and pieces of complete sentences. Another common error that some writers commit involves just the reverse kind of action. They weakly and wrongly join two complete sentences (independent clauses) with a comma as if those two sentences were really only one sentence. Such an error is called a comma splice. There are four ways to correct comma splices:

- Remove the comma separating two independent clauses and replace it with a period;
- Insert a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, nor, so, for, yet) after the comma;
- Rewrite the sentence (if it makes sense to do so). Turn the independent clauses into a dependent clause by adding a subordinate conjunction;
- Delete the comma and insert a semicolon.

## 4. Avoiding run-on sentences

A run-on sentence is the opposite of a sentence fragment. The fragment gives the readers too little information while the run-on sentence forces readers to digest two or more grammatically complete sentences without proper punctuations.

## 5. Making subjects and verbs consistent in your sentence

A subject and a verb must agree in number. A singular subject takes a singular verb, whereas a plural subject requires a plural verb.

## 6. Writing sentences that say what you mean

Your sentences should say exactly what you mean, without double-talk, misplaced humor, or nonsense. Sentences are composed of words and word groups that influence each other.

- Organize logical sentences.
- Select contextually appropriate words.
- Write sentences with well-placed modifiers.

## 7. Using pronoun references in the sentences correctly

Sentences will be vague if they contain misused pronouns. When you use a pronoun whose antecedent is unclear, you risk confusing your readers.

## Section 2 Sample Analysis

### Sample An Inappropriately Written Letter

Pro-tech, Ltd.

5 - 8 - 09

Mr. Antonio Guzmern

Canderas

Mercedes Ave.

Bunos Aires, ARG

Dear Tony,

I wanted to drop you a line before the merger hits and in doing so touch base and give you the lowdown on how our department words here in the good old U. S of A.

None of us had a clue that Pro-Tech was going to go south of the border but your recent meeting about the Smartboard T-C spoke volumes to the tech people who praised your operations to the hilt. So it looks like you and I both will be getting a new corp. name. Ole. I love moving from Pro-Tech, Ltd. To Pro-Tech International. We are so glad we can help you guys out.

At any rate, I'm sending you an e-mail with all the ins and outs of our department struc. , layout, employees, and prod. Eff. Quotas. From this info, I'm hoping you will be able to see ways for us to streamline, cooperate, and soar in the market. I understand that all of this is in the works that you and I need to have a face-to-face and so I'd appreciate your reciprocating with all the relevant data stat.

Consequently, I guess I'll be flying down your way next month. Before I take off, I would like to give you a ring. How does after lunch next Thursday (say, 1:00 - 1:30) sound to you? I hope this is doable.

We've had a spell of great weather here (can you believe it's in the low 80's today!).

So, I guess I'll just sign off, and wait 'til I hear from you further.

I send you felicitations and want things to go smoothly before the merger is upon us.

Adios.

Frank Sims

【评析】这是一封表述不当的信函。语言表达不够正式，缺乏尊重。行文充满习语及缩略语，同时也忽略了文化差异的因素，表达不够准确。

## Section 3 Tasks

1. Read the sample letter again and rewrite it to an appropriate one.
2. Rewrite the following letter to make it more effective. Add any details you think are relevant.

Dear Pizza Lovers:

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Rudy Moore and I am the new manager of Tasty Pizza Parlor in town. The Parlor is located at the intersection of North Miller Parkway and 95th Street. We are open from 10 a. m. to 11 p. m. except on the weekends, when we are open later.

I think you will be as happy as I am to learn that Tasty's will now offer free delivery to an extended service area. As a result, you can get your Tasty Pizza hot when you want it.

Please see your weekly newspapers for our ad. We also are offering customers a coupon. It is a real deal for you.

I know you will enjoy Tasty's pizza and I hope to see you. I am always interested in hearing from you about our service and our fine product. We want to take your order soon. Please come in.



## Unit 2 Business Letters



### Warm-up

1. What is a successful business letter?
2. What should be taken into consideration when writing a business letter?

## Section 1 Background Knowledge

### ☞ Principles of Business Letter Writing

#### Seven C's Principle\*

If you've been looking for simple guidelines you can follow in business writing, you might consider the "7 C's". Quick to understand and easy to remember, following them is guaranteed to improve the quality of your business papers.

- ① **Clarity** Good business writing is clear. It has a definite message, with no confusion about what each sentence is trying to communicate.
- ② **Correctness** It has both correct grammar (courtesy of business English software) and accurate facts, successfully communicating your message because all mistakes, whether mechanical or factual, have been sufficiently addressed.

\* 李蕾. 商务英语函电 [M]. 北京: 对外经贸出版社, 2011.

- ③ **Conciseness** Properly written business papers are concise, expressing ideas in just enough words as is necessary. There's no unnecessary long-windedness and beating around the bush.
- ④ **Conversational** Good business writing sounds like an actual business conversation. There's no difficult language to process and no unnecessary ambiguity.
- ⑤ **Convincing** It uses a serious tone to paint a believable and convincing picture, regardless of whether you're persuading a prospect customer or presenting a report.
- ⑥ **Courteous** Good business writing takes people into account, so it's neither callous nor insensitive. There's a prevailing air of courtesy to everyone addressed, regardless of how high or low their job titles may be.
- ⑦ **Complete** A good business paper should be complete, containing all the information the recipients will need in order to effectively understand it.

### Other Points To Be Noted

#### 1. Plan before you write

- Look up words you need before you start.
- Note the points you want to make, and order them into logical paragraphs.

#### 2. Tone

- Write as you would speak in a business conversation.
- The tone should be friendly and polite.

#### 3. Names

- Make sure you check the gender of the addressee (the recipient), as well as the correct spelling of the person's name and title.
- Use "Ms." for women and "Mr." for men.
- You can use "Mrs." for a woman if you are sure that she is married.

#### 4. Remember this word order principle

Subject	Verb	Object	Manner	Place	Time
Who	Does	What	How	Where	When

For example:

Mr. Brown will travel by plane to London on Monday, June 5th.

A technician will install the equipment in your office on Tuesday.

#### 5. Avoid old-fashioned words

- Although they are used in legal documents and contracts, words like "herewith" "herein" "aforementioned", etc. are rarely used in letters.
- The following style of sentence is preferable: "You will find more information on our products in the enclosed brochure."

## Structure of Business Letters\*

### 1. The standard parts

**Letterhead** A letterhead is the heading at the top of a sheet of letter paper, which usually includes: name, address, a logo or corporate design. For example:

Overseas Trading Company

52 Huangpu Avenue, Guangzhou, China

Tel: 43883593      Telex: 43883487GBC      Fax: 43883963

**Inside address** Inside Address includes the receiver's name and title, company name, street address, city, state (province), post-code, and country (if necessary). It is usually typed at the upper left-hand margin of the sheet, two to three lines below the last line of the letterhead. For example:

Mr. Li hua

HR Manager

Guangdong Hongxing Imp. & Exp. Company

286 Yuehai Tower, Dongfeng Road

Guangzhou, China

**Date** The date is typed below the letterhead. As the date is an important part of a business letter, the month is written in full words, because it may cause confusion if written in numbers. There are two common formats: American (month/day/year) and British (day/month/year). For example:

November 27, 2015

27 November 2015

**Salutation** Salutation is placed two lines below the inside address. If the letter is addressed to an individual whose name you know, use that person's courtesy title and last name. If you address to your friend or the person you know well, you can use the first name.

But when addressing to a firm or a company, the Americans prefer to use "Gentlemen" while the British use "Dear Sirs". Even when the firm's name is the name of a single individual, the salutation of plural form (Gentlemen) is preferred. When writing to a firm consisting of both men and women, or even to a firm consisting of women alone, the salutation of "Gentlemen" is preferably used.

The following table shows some common salutations.

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\* 李蕾. 商务英语函电 [M]. 北京: 对外经贸出版社, 2011.