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Writing for Impact

Tim Banks

高级商务写作



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剑桥商务英语沟通技能

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Cambridge Business Skills



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Contents

Getting ready to write for impact

- 1 Introductions, requests, enquiries
 - A Introduce yourself in emails and letters
 - B Enquiries and requests in emails and letters
- 2 Notes and minutes
 - A Note-taking skills
 - B Meeting minutes
- 3 Invitations and letters
 - A Write, accept and decline invitations
 - B Formats for business letters
- 4 Preparing a report
 - A Analyse what makes a report effective
 - B Making notes for a report
- 5 Making your case in a report
 - A The Introduction
 - B Present information and describe data
- 6 Getting the tone right
 - A Ensure the style is right
 - B Apologise and thank in emails and letters

Case study 1: Komplete Solutions

- 7 Making and responding to complaints
 - A Make complaints
 - B Handle complaints
- 8 The body of the report
 - A Link your ideas and build effective paragraphs
 - B Think about the reader
- 9 Negotiating in writing
 - A Negotiate via email; confirm agreement
 - B Structure negotiating emails
- 10 The report concluded
 - A The Conclusions section
 - B The Recommendations section
- 11 Making arrangements by email
 - A Set up meetings; confirm and change arrangements
 - B Check understanding; clarify meaning
- 12 Finishing a report
 - A Write an Executive summary
 - B Edit and check your writing

Case study 2: ADC

Audio scripts

Answer key

Additional materials

Extended writing tasks

Extended writing tasks: Model answers

Acknowledgements

- 4 为有感染力的写作做准备
- 6 自我介绍、提出需求、询价
 - 在邮件和信件中自我介绍
 - 在邮件和信件中提出需求并询价
- 10 笔记和会议记录
 - 记录技巧
 - 会议记录
- 14 邀请函和商务信函
 - 写邀请函, 接受邀请和辞谢邀请
 - 商务信函的格式
- 18 报告准备
 - 分析报告有效的要素
 - 报告提纲
- 22 在报告中提出你的方案
 - 报告的简介
 - 呈现信息和数据
- 26 语气合适
 - 确保文体恰当
 - 邮件和信件中的道歉和感谢
- 30 案例分析 1: Komplete Solutions
- 32 投诉及处理投诉
 - 投诉
 - 处理投诉
- 36 报告的正文
 - 关联你的想法及编写好的段落
 - 考虑读者
- 40 书面谈判
 - 通过邮件进行谈判; 确认协议
 - 使谈判邮件结构化
- 44 报告总结
 - 结论部分
 - 建议部分
- 48 通过邮件安排会面
 - 安排会面; 确认及修改会面安排
 - 检查对邮件的理解是否准确; 弄清邮件内容
- 52 完成报告
 - 写概要
 - 编辑并检查报告
- 56 案例分析 2: ADC
- 58 音频脚本
- 64 答案
- 80 补充资料
- 84 延伸写作任务
- 88 延伸写作任务的解答范例
- 96 致谢

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Contents

Getting ready to write for impact

- 1 Introductions, requests, enquiries
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 - A Note-taking skills
 - B Meeting minutes
- 3 Invitations and letters
 - A Write, accept and decline invitations
 - B Formats for business letters
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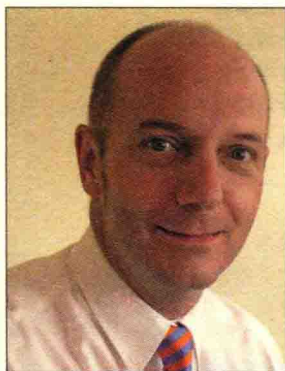
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 - B Handle complaints
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 - B Think about the reader
- 9 Negotiating in writing
 - A Negotiate via email; confirm agreement
 - B Structure negotiating emails
- 10 The report concluded
 - A The Conclusions section
 - B The Recommendations section
- 11 Making arrangements by email
 - A Set up meetings; confirm and change arrangements
 - B Check understanding; clarify meaning
- 12 Finishing a report
 - A Write an Executive summary
 - B Edit and check your writing

Case study 2: ADC

Audio scripts
 Answer key
 Additional materials
 Extended writing tasks
 Extended writing tasks: Model answers
 Acknowledgements

- 4 为有感染力的写作做准备
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 - 记录技巧
 - 会议记录
- 14 邀请函和商务信函
 - 写邀请函, 接受邀请和辞谢邀请
 - 商务信函的格式
- 18 报告准备
 - 分析报告有效的要素
 - 报告提纲
- 22 在报告中提出你的方案
 - 报告的简介
 - 呈现信息和数据
- 26 语气合适
 - 确保文体恰当
 - 邮件和信件中的道歉和感谢
- 30 案例分析 1: Komplete Solutions
- 32 投诉及处理投诉
 - 投诉
 - 处理投诉
- 36 报告的正文
 - 关联你的想法及编写好的段落
 - 考虑读者
- 40 书面谈判
 - 通过邮件进行谈判; 确认协议
 - 使谈判邮件结构化
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 - 结论部分
 - 建议部分
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 - 安排会面; 确认及修改会面安排
 - 检查对邮件的理解是否准确; 弄清邮件内容
- 52 完成报告
 - 写概要
 - 编辑并检查报告
- 56 案例分析 2: ADC
- 58 音频脚本
- 64 答案
- 80 补充资料
- 84 延伸写作任务
- 88 延伸写作任务的解答范例
- 96 致谢

Getting ready to write for impact



Everyone working in business needs to write, whether it's a few lines in emails or long reports. Indeed, with changes in information technology we use written communication more than ever before. Written business communication is about more than just good language – to be effective you need to write clearly and concisely, and make your message relevant to the people who read it.

Tim Banks

Welcome to *Writing for Impact*, one of a new series of courses from Cambridge University Press designed to develop excellence in business communication in English. In addition to this book and Audio CD, there are full Trainer's Notes and ideas on how to get the most from the course at <http://www.cambridge.org/elt/writingforimpact>

The secret of writing for impact

Whether you're working in a small private company, a multinational or a public organisation or preparing to start work, you need to be able to write for impact in English.

This course will enable you to:

- Write confidently and effectively in English.
- Write with greater ease, using a process approach.
- Organise your writing to create impact.
- Write the most frequent types of business English documents: emails, letters, reports, notes and minutes.
- Tailor your writing to the needs of the readers.
- Use an appropriate style, whether it's a formal document or an email to a colleague.
- Edit and check your writing to be more accurate and more effective.
- Develop the range of language you use in your writing.

The approach

Effective writing doesn't take place in isolation, and nor does learning to write effectively. In each module of *Writing for Impact* you'll find examples of business documents, with a variety of listening tasks and speaking activities. Writing is part of a process of business communication and this course reflects that reality.

Each module allows you to relate the topic to your own learning context and to reflect on what you have learnt in order to apply it to your own unique circumstances.

Practice is clearly important, and every module offers you opportunities to try out what you have learnt and develop your skills.

Writing practice

Each module:


- Includes short activities to develop the skills you need to write effectively and for impact.
- Ends with an **Info action** section providing practice of the areas covered in that module.
- Has an accompanying Extended writing activity to give you the opportunity for further practice.

There are also two Case studies, after Modules 6 and 12, which provide you with comprehensive writing practice. At the back of the book you will find the Audio scripts, the Answer key, which includes model answers, some model documents, and the Extended writing tasks, with model answers.

Flexibility

Writing for Impact can be used flexibly. You can select the parts that are most relevant to you. There are 12 modules which can be taken in any order, although we would recommend that you cover the report-writing modules in the order they are in the book.

Writing for Impact and you

 Texts with this symbol by them have been taken from the Cambridge English Corpus – one of the world's largest databases of authentic written and spoken English.

Before you begin using the course, take a few moments to consider your own needs. Tick the comments that apply to you, and see how *Writing for Impact* can help you develop your writing skills.

- ☐ I would like to develop my writing skills in all areas and for all types of business document.
- ☐ I need to write emails and sometimes letters in English.
- ☐ I need to improve my writing of business reports in English.
- ☐ I often take notes and minutes of meetings in English, and would like to develop this skill.
- ☐ I'm not confident about using an appropriate style in my writing.
- ☐ I find it difficult to check and correct my writing.
- ☐ I feel I need more practice in writing business documents.
- ☐ I sometimes have problems getting started and organising the content of business documents.
- ☐ I have trouble presenting data and information clearly.
- ☐ I would like to develop the range of phrases I use to write things like invitations and enquiries.
- ☐ I have to deal with complaints from customers and would like to improve how I do this.

- ➔ You can follow the whole course in sequence. This will develop your business writing skills in all areas across a range of business documents.
- ➔ Modules 1, 3, 6, 7, 9 and 11 focus particularly on aspects of writing letters and emails. Other modules will also help you develop your writing more generally.
- ➔ Modules 4, 5, 8, 10 and 12 focus on aspects of writing reports. Other modules will also help you develop your writing more generally.
- ➔ Module 2 focuses on taking notes and writing minutes of meetings, with practice activities to develop your skills.
- ➔ Module 6 focuses on getting the tone right in your writing; Module 8 looks at using plain English. Other modules also include advice on cultural considerations, the length of your writing and considering your reader.
- ➔ Module 12 looks particularly at editing and checking your writing, with a suggested checklist to use.
- ➔ Each module has practice activities, the Extended writing sections offer more practice, and the two Case studies practise a range of document types.
- ➔ Module 4 focuses on developing and organising content for your writing – this should help you get started and plan your writing.
- ➔ Module 5 looks at presenting information in various formats, such as tables and graphs.
- ➔ Module 1 looks at introductions, requests and enquiries; Module 3 deals with invitations; Module 11 focuses on making arrangements.
- ➔ Module 7 looks at both making and handling complaints, with patterns to help you write responses.

1A Introductions, requests, enquiries

Aims

Introduce yourself in emails and letters
Consider greetings, opening lines and endings



Tip

Commas can be used after the greeting and after the ending, but they are optional. However, you should be consistent: if you use a comma after the greeting, then also use one after the ending.

- Consider these questions.
 - What kind of email/letter makes a good impression on you?
 - What kind of email/letter makes a bad impression on you?
- Listen to two business people, Sue Evans and David Anderson, answering these two questions and make notes. Are their opinions similar to or different from yours?
- Look at the beginnings of six emails and letters. Which do you think come from emails and which from letters, or which could come from both, and why?

1
Dear Mr and Mrs Johnson
I am writing to thank you for your past gifts to the University Libraries.

2
Dear Sir
I am writing to enquire about your business advisory service. We are a young company developing and producing innovative office equipment. Headquartered in Mainz, we have production sites in Breganz and Friedrichshafen.

3
Jill
Would you mind if we move our meeting to 3.30 this afternoon? I've double-booked myself again!

4
Dear Paul
I'm writing to apologise for not having been in touch to arrange a meeting.

5
Dear Ms Potts
Let me introduce myself. My name is Elena Ortega and I work for Edibliss, a very well-known Spanish company in the food sector.

6
Dear Sir or Madam
I'm writing to enquire about vacancies with your company. As you can see from my CV (attached), I have several years' experience as a ...

Tip

The greeting in an email or letter is like the handshake when you meet someone. The greeting you choose depends on how well you know the person, the subject of the communication, and the local culture and the culture of your company.

- 4** Match the greetings from the extracts in **3** to the situations when they are usually used.

Greeting

Situation

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1 Dear Sir or Madam | <input type="checkbox"/> a Formal. You don't know who you're writing to, but you know it's a man. |
| 2 Dear Sir | <input type="checkbox"/> b You know the person. You may have met them or had previous contact with them. |
| 3 Dear Ms Potts | <input type="checkbox"/> c You know the person, probably quite well. They may be a colleague. |
| 4 Dear Paul | <input type="checkbox"/> d Formal. You don't know the person you're writing to, or if you're writing to a man or woman. |
| 5 Jill | <input type="checkbox"/> e Quite a formal situation. You know the name of the person, but you don't know them well. |

- 5 Choose from the greetings in 4 and match them to the endings. You can use the greetings more than once.

Greeting
<i>Dear Ms Potts / Dear Paul</i>
<i>Dear Ms Potts / Dear Paul</i>

Ending
Yours faithfully
Thanks
Regards
Best wishes
Yours sincerely
Best/Kind regards
See you
Bye

Tip

Begin emails to a group with *Dear All* or nothing at all.

Don't use the first and family name together in a greeting. Write *Dear Susan* or *Dear Ms Barnett* (not *Dear Ms Susan Barnett*), depending on how well you know the person.

Don't use job titles (not *Dear HR Manager*). This doesn't create a good impression. It's better to use the name of the person if you know it, e.g. *Dear Mr Walker*, or *Dear Sir/Madam* if you don't know the name of the person.

- 6 Look back at the six email and letter extracts in 3.

- 1 Complete the frequent opening line in emails and letters. What other words/phrases can you think of that might continue this opening line?

I am / I'm thank you for ...
 enquire about ...
 apologise for ...

- 2 Find two ways of introducing yourself / your company.

a me

 b and

 and

- 3 Complete these sentences to form more ways of introducing yourself / your company.

a I'm writing myself to you.
 b My Brian, and I was given your email address by ...
 c My is a world leader in the field of telecommunications, and we ...

- 7 **Reflection** What are the conventions for greetings and endings of letters in your language?

Are the conventions the same for emails? Is a particular style of writing preferred where you work?

- 8 **Into action** Write the beginnings of two emails.

- 1 Briefly introduce yourself and your company to a potential client who has contacted your customer services / reception staff and asked for some basic information.
 2 Email a colleague you work with closely, to tell them about the potential client, as you will be away on holiday for several days.

1B Introductions, requests, enquiries



Aims

Make enquiries in emails and letters

Make requests in emails and letters

1 Consider these questions.

- 1 In what situations do you make/handle enquiries by email or letter?
- 2 Which enquiries are usually handled by junior staff and which by managers?

2 Read the letter and answer these questions.

- 1 What is the purpose of the letter?
- 2 Find three phrases in the letter that are used to make polite requests.

FASHIONONLINE

BLOCK B • MEADOW OFFICE PARK • NOTTINGHAM • NG5 6LS

Personalised Goods
Luxia Co. Ltd
75 West Donghu St
Guangzhou
China 530500

26 October 20__

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to ask you to provide a quotation for the following promotional items.

Product: USB memory sticks (8GB) embossed with our company logo (Ref: NG 237691)
Quantity: 2,000

Could you please include in the quotation the cost of delivery to our premises, and give an estimate of the time from placing an order to delivery of the goods?

I would be grateful if you could provide the quotation as soon as possible by fax or email (details below).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

Ben Harcourt
Marketing and Promotions Manager

Tip

It's usually good to be concise in business writing. Your aim is to achieve clear and effective communication, and this is best done by keeping your message short and simple.

- 3 Choose phrases from the box to complete the sentences. Which phrase is the most direct and informal? Which phrases are most tentative and formal?

I am writing to ask you Can you I'd be grateful if you
 Could you please Would you mind I'd appreciate it if you

- 1 helping me to organise the event next Friday?
- 2 send me a link to that site you mentioned this morning?
- 3 to refrain from using our company logo on your website.
- 4 could send the invoice before the end of the month.
- 5 return the completed order form to our sales department?
- 6 would allow our MBA students to visit your offices as part of this research.

- 4  Complete this short email.


Dear Mr Zhukov,

I'm writing to ¹..... about the possibility of cooperation between our companies with regard to transportation.


Our company is a leading manufacturer of high-quality wooden furniture, with a good share of the market in Central Europe. We are currently looking to develop our share of the Russian market, and I am ²..... identifying a transportation partner to work with.


³..... tell me if your company would be interested in this?

Regards,

- 5  03 Listen to the extract from a telephone conversation.

- 1 What does the caller want to do?
- 2 Complete the notes made by the hotel manager during the call.

- 6  **Reflection** Which phrases will you use when you introduce yourself in an email or letter? What have you learnt in this module that will improve your email writing?

- 7  **Into action** The caller in 5 needs to get a range of quotes so he can choose the best venue. He decides to send emails to other hotels. Write the email he sends to the hotels, introducing himself and making similar requests.

Conference for ¹.....
 managers

²..... delegates

Conference suite - main meeting room and three? smaller meeting rooms

Conference for ³..... days

Accommodation for ⁴..... nights

Early ⁵.....

Request for two separate quotes - guest rooms and ⁶.....

Course links

For further practice, go to Extended writing task Module 1 on page 84.
 For more on letters and emails, go to Modules 3, 6, 7 and 11.