



21st CENTURY
实用规划教材

21 世纪全国高等院校**财经管理**系列实用规划教材

外贸函电

(第2版)

主 编/王 妍 刘亚卓



北京大学出版社
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS

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副主编 李 涛 黄 伟



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内 容 简 介

本书以外贸业务中的商务信函为例,介绍商务信函的写作方法、写作技巧,旨在使读者能够熟练地运用英文进行外贸相关业务的磋商谈判。本书共分为 14 个单元,包括询盘、报价、还盘、订货、支付、包装、运输、保险、索赔、代理、补偿和加工贸易、合资和投标、案例研究与合同等内容。

本书可作为高等院校财经管理类各专业的本科生教材,也可作为相关工作人员的自学参考用书。

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举报电话: 010-62752024 电子信箱: fd@pup.pku.edu.cn

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丛 书 序

我国越来越多的高等院校设置了经济管理类学科专业，这是一个包括经济学、管理科学与工程、工商管理、公共管理、农业经济管理、图书档案学 6 个二级学科门类和 22 个专业的庞大学科体系。2006 年教育部的数据表明在全国普通高校中经济类专业布点 1518 个，管理类专业布点 4328 个。其中除少量院校设置的经济管理专业偏重理论教学外，绝大部分属于应用型专业。经济管理类应用型专业主要着眼于培养社会主义国民经济发展所需要的德智体全面发展的高素质专门人才，要求既具有比较扎实的理论功底和良好的发展后劲，又具有较强的职业技能，并且又要求具有较好的创新精神和实践能力。

在当前开拓新型工业化道路，推进全面小康社会建设的新时期，进一步加强经济管理人才的培养，注重经济理论的系统化学习，特别是现代财经管理理论的学习，提高学生的专业理论素质和应用实践能力，培养出一大批高水平、高素质的经济管理人才，越来越成为提升我国经济竞争力、保证国民经济持续健康发展的重要前提。这就要求高等财经教育要更加注重依据国内外社会经济条件的变化适时变革和调整教育目标和教学内容；要求经济管理学科专业更加注重应用、注重实践、注重规范、注重国际交流；要求经济管理学科专业与其他学科专业相互交融与协调发展；要求高等财经教育培养的人才具有更加丰富的社会知识和较强的人文素质及创新精神。要完成上述任务，各所高等院校需要进行深入的教学改革和创新。特别是要搞好有较高质量的教材的编写和创新。

出版社的领导和编辑通过对国内大学经济管理学科教材实际情况的调研，在与众多专家学者讨论的基础上，决定编写和出版一套面向经济管理学科专业的应用型系列教材，这是一项有利于促进高校教学改革发展的重要措施。

本系列教材是按照高等学校经济类和管理类学科本科专业规范、培养方案，以及课程教学大纲的要求，合理定位，由长期在教学第一线从事教学工作的教师立足于 21 世纪经济管理类学科发展的需要，深入分析经济管理类专业本科学生现状及存在问题，探索经济管理类专业本科学生综合素质培养的途径，以科学性、先进性、系统性和实用性为目标，其编写的特色主要体现在以下几个方面。

(1) 关注经济管理学科发展的大背景，拓宽理论基础和专业知识，着眼于增强教学内容的联系实际和应用性，突出创造能力和创新意识。

(2) 体系完整、严密。系列涵盖经济类、管理类相关专业以及与经管相关的部分法律类课程，并把握相关课程之间的关系，整个系列丛书形成一套完整、严密的知识结构体系。

(3) 内容新颖。借鉴国外最新的教材，融会当前有关经济管理学科的最新理论和实践经验，用最新知识充实教材内容。

(4) 合作交流的成果。本系列教材是由全国上百所高校教师共同编写而成，在相互进行学术交流、经验借鉴、取长补短、集思广益的基础上，形成编写大纲。最终融合了各地

特点，具有较强的适应性。

(5) 案例教学。教材具备大量案例研究分析，让学生在学习过程中理论联系实际，特别列举了我国经济管理工作中的大量实际案例，这可大大增强学生的实际操作能力。

(6) 注重能力的培养。力求做到不断强化自我学习能力、思维能力、创造性解决问题的能力以及不断自我更新知识的能力，促进学生向着富有鲜明个性的方向发展。

作为高要求，财经管理类教材应在基本理论上做到以马克思主义为指导，结合我国财经工作的新实践，充分汲取中华民族优秀文化和西方科学管理思想，形成具有中国特色的创新教材。这一目标不可能一蹴而就，需要作者通过长期艰苦的学术劳动和不断地进行教材内容的更新才能达成。我希望这一系列教材的编写，将是我国拥有较高质量的高校财经管理学科应用型教材建设工程的新尝试和新起点。

我要感谢参加本系列教材编写和审稿的各位老师所付出的大量卓有成效的辛勤劳动。由于编写时间紧、相互协调难度大等原因，本系列教材肯定还存在一些不足和错漏。我相信，在各位老师的关心和帮助下，本系列教材一定能不断地改进和完善，并在我国大学经济管理类学科专业的教学改革和课程体系建设中起到应有的促进作用。

刘诗白

2007年8月

刘诗白 刘诗白教授现任西南财经大学名誉校长、博士生导师，四川省社会科学联合会主席，《经济学家》杂志主编，全国高等财经院校资本论研究会会长，学术团体“新知研究院”院长。

第2版前言

《外贸函电》自2007年9月出版以来,受到大专院校师生和广大经贸工作者的欢迎和好评。2010年被北京大学出版社评为“21世纪全国应用型本科财经管理系列实用规划教材”中的优秀教材。

近几年,我国对外经济贸易发展迅速,与世界各国和地区的交往日趋频繁,国际商务沟通的作用也变得越来越重要。为了适应外贸企业日趋激烈的国际合作与竞争的形势需要,同时应广大读者的要求,也为答谢读者朋友对本书的厚爱,编写组对本书的总体结构和各单元内容做了全面系统的修订工作,以期帮助读者更好地掌握外贸函电的基础知识和技能,使其在掌握外贸业务知识的前提下,更好地运用英语这个工具,以便将来在外贸的相关工作岗位上具备较强的适应性和独立工作的能力,成为专业知识扎实、业务过硬、英语水平较高的外贸销售人员、谈判人员、管理人员等高素质的国际复合型人才。

本书保留了原书实用性和可操作性的特点:有去信和回信,方便读者阅读和学习;每单元后的相关注释和补充阅读丰富了该书的内容,使读者进一步增强外贸函电写作的应用性和灵活性,有利于扩大知识面,开阔视野,更好地理解专业知识,提高英语水平。

本书共分为14个单元,包括询盘、报价、还盘、订货、支付、包装、运输、保险、索赔、代理、补偿和加工贸易、合资和投标、案例研究与合同等内容。案例研究单元主要以一宗国际交易为例,系统展示了整个交易过程中的函电往来,使读者通过前面研究的学习,对外贸函电有一个完整清晰的印象。所有函电的往来最终都是为了达成交易,形成合同。合同单元介绍了合同拟定的基本原则,并对各个条款的拟定进行了详细的讲解。本书对每个单元原有的样信、相关注释和补充阅读进行了增删和修订。本书还增加了附录部分——相关的函电、一般商用词汇和一般商用英语缩写词汇等,以方便读者查阅。本书对每个单元的课后练习题进行了适当的改动,并增加了口语翻译部分,进一步增强了外贸函电的可操作性,以提高读者的口语翻译水平。

本书单元1、7、12及附录由辽宁工业大学王妍修订,单元2、3、5、9由兰州理工大学刘亚卓修订,单元4、6、10、13由太原科技大学李涛修订,单元8、11、14由天津工业大学黄伟修订;王妍负责统稿。

由于编者水平所限,书中不妥之处在所难免,恳请各位读者多提宝贵意见。

编者
2013年1月

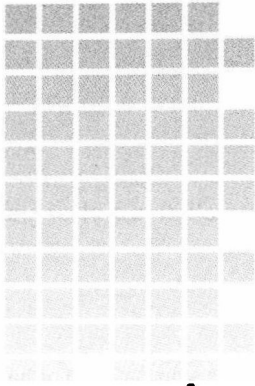
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Unit **1**

Form and Structure of A Business Letter

OBJECTIVES

- Understanding the essentials of business letter-writing
- Knowing the layouts of business letters
- Knowing the layouts of a business letter envelope

REQUIREMENTS

- Getting a knowledge of the principles of business letter-writing
- Grasping how to organize a good business letter
- Grasping how to address envelopes

Principles of Good Communication

Introduction

A good business letter does not ramble on. It supplies all pertinent information in a clear and concise manner. Generally, business writing has only two goals:

- (1) To make people understand you.
- (2) To get them to take proper action.

Your readers take the proper action only when they know not only what you say but what you want. Do you want them to:

- (1) buy your product or service?
- (2) confirm a decision?
- (3) simply like you and think you are good to do business with?

All those things (buying, confirming, even liking and thinking) are actions.

In order to let your reader understand what you want (and then do it), he or she must first understand precisely what you mean in your writing. If he or she has to guess, there is a good chance the guess will be wrong.

People who read your letters have no opportunity to interpret your body language or tone of voice as they would in a conversation. So although you should write as much as you speak, you should think of the times when you speak at your best—when your words, sentences, and paragraphs are more precise than your typical everyday speech. Even when it is structured and precise, good writing helps your reader see you as a real person, and treat him or her as one too.

Time is valuable in business. Writing effective business letters will help you transact business quickly, effectively, and courteously. To write effectively, say what you mean, and make sure your readers understand you, keep the following principles in mind.

“7C” Principles

1. Clarity

Good business writing is all about being clear. The business letter should not have subtle allegorical overtones requiring careful study, or different shades of meaning. In short, it should not be open to interpretation.

Every word should mean one thing, each sentence should say one thing, and together they should create a tool for achieving your goal. Therefore, keep in mind the purpose of your letter and use appropriate words in correct sentence structure and convey your meaning. Straightforward and simple English is needed for business letters. If your reader understands you and does what you intend, then your writing succeeds.

1) Choose short, familiar, conversational words and expressions

e.g.

after (short) subsequent (long)

use (short) utilize (long)

before (simple and conversational) in the event of (complicated)

We can deliver (simple and conversational)

We are in a position to deliver (complicated)

Thank you for your letter (conversational)

We acknowledge with thanks your letter (commercial jargon)

2) Avoid using the words which have different understanding or unclear meanings

e.g.

We shall take a firm line with the firm.

We shall take a strong line with the firm. (better)

3) Use active voice

e.g. compare:

A fax was sent by us yesterday.

We sent you a fax yesterday.

2. Conciseness

Don't make your reader have to wade through long, rambling sentences. Write concisely and clearly and use a simple sentence structure. To achieve this, try to avoid wordiness or redundancy. Stick to your plan and only include information both relevant and necessary. Proceed cautiously here, however, because business writing should not be an endless series of short and choppy sentences. Don't be so concise that you become blunt.

1) Avoid using wordy expressions

Wordy: We wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter

Concise: We appreciate your letter

Wordy: Enclosed herewith please find two copies of

Concise: We enclose two copies of

2) Avoid unnecessary repetition

e.g.

Will you ship us any time during the month of December, or even November would suit us just as well.

Rewriting:

Please ship us by the end of November.

3) Avoid padded expressions

e.g.

It should be noted that this is the best we can do.

Please be advised that we have received your invoice.

3. Courtesy

Courtesy is not mere politeness. The courteous writer should be sincere and tactful, thoughtful and appreciative. It is the quality that enables us to refuse to perform a favor and meanwhile keep a friend; to refuse a customer's request for credit without killing all hopes of future business.

Another important thing is dealing with all letters promptly. Punctuality will please your customer who dislikes waiting for days before he/she gets a reply to his/her letter.

1) Use courteous and friendly words and expressions

e.g.

We are highly appreciated that

Thank you for

We are pleased that

2) Avoid using negative (unpleasant) words

e.g.

You are requested to send payment by June.

Please send payment by June. (better)

We must tell you that we can't accept your proposal.

Unfortunately, we can't accept your proposal. (better)

4. Completeness

A good communication should include all the necessary information. You should write not only what must be said, but also what should be said to achieve your goal. Make sure that your letter includes enough information for your reader to get what you mean, and that you come across as tactful and polite, not terse and unfeeling. It is essential to check the message carefully before it is sent out.

5. Concreteness

Strive to make your letter be exact, definite and specific, avoiding vagueness, ambiguity, or the use of platitudes. Most people use specific language when they talk casually: they tell stories with details, colors, and smells. Write in the same way. Use words to paint pictures in your reader's mind instead of letting him or her to dissect abstract concepts.

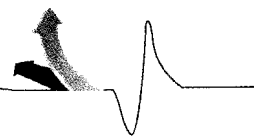
e.g.

Various aspects of this equipment make it a good choice.

This machine is a good choice because it is more compact and less expensive than any other one on the market. (better)

6. Consideration

Consideration emphasizes "You-attitude" rather than "We-attitude". When writing a letter, keep in mind the reader's requests, needs, desires, as well as his/her feelings. Try to understand



and respect the reader's point of view and resist the temptation to reply as if you could not be in the wrong.

1) Use You-attitude

e.g.

We allow two percent discount for cash payment.

2) Focus on the positive approach

e.g.

We don't believe you will have cause for dissatisfaction. (negative)

We feel sure you will be entirely satisfied. (positive)

7. Correctness

Good business writing is correct in both technique and facts. Therefore, correctness refers not only to correct usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling, but also to standard language, proper statement, accurate figures, factual information and the correct understanding of commercial jargons. Again, check your letter over before you send it to avoid the awkwardness of correcting a mistake after your readers see it.

1) Grammar errors often occurred in business letters

(1) With pronouns: Our competitors' prices are about 3% lower than us (ours).

(2) With verbs: Neither of the offers are (is) acceptable.

(3) With adjectives: The two first (first two) items are not available.

(4) With conjunctions: This machine not only (is attractive not only) in proper price, but also in good quality.

2) Make the numbers accurate

e.g.

(1) On or before May 10th.

(2) The offer is firm until April 4th (inclusive).

(3) US \$2 300 (US Dollars two thousand and three hundred only).

The Structure of A Business Letter

1. The standard parts

A standard business letter contains seven parts.

1) The letterhead

The letterhead expresses the personality of a company and often indicates the writer's company name & address, telephone number, fax number, email, internet website and the kind of business carried on. Usually it is centered or at the right or left margin of a letter writing paper. Nowadays, more and more business letters have preprinted letterhead stationary which contains the above information.

2) The date

The date is generally placed at least two lines below the letterhead to the right for indented

style or to the left for the blocked style. The date should be typed in full and not abbreviated (i.e., November for Nov.) and the -th, -st, -nd and -rd that follow the day can be omitted (i.e., 3 May for 3rd May). Please see to it that the year is typed in full (i.e., 2006 instead of 06). Always spell out the month and include the day, a comma, and the year. The preferred forms of dates are as follows:

18 August, 2006

August 18, 2006

Avoid giving the dates in figures, since it may easily cause confusion. It is English practice to follow the order of day, month and year while the American practice is to write in the order of month, day and year. So 10/6/2006 could be taken as either 10 June, 2006 or October 6, 2006.

3) The inside address

It consists of the correspondent's full name and address, which appears exactly the same way as on the envelope. It is typed single-spacing at the left-hand margin about two or four lines after the date. Generally, the inside name and address in a business letter should include the following:

- (1) the name of the firm or company addressed to.
- (2) the number and the name of the building or house.
- (3) the number and the name of street.
- (4) the name of the city, state or county and its postal code.
- (5) the name of the country.

Ordinary courtesy titles used in correspondence are Mr. for a man, Mrs. for a married woman, Miss for an unmarried woman and Ms. for both married and unmarried women. In recent years it has become customary to use Ms. as the courtesy title for many women, particularly career women, strongly object to being addressed as Mrs. or Miss.

Esq. instead of Mr. is sometimes used for certain classes of persons. Mr. always precedes the name while Esq. always follows the name, separated from it by a comma, e.g.:

Mr. George Smith

George Smith, Esq.

Messrs., an abbreviation for the French word Messieurs, which is used only for partnership whose company name includes a personal element, e.g.:

Messrs. S. Laurel and O. Hardy

Messrs. J. Waston & Co.

4) The salutation

The salutation is the polite greeting with which every letter begins. The customary formal greeting in a business letter is "Dear Sir (Madam)", "Dear Sirs (Mesdames)" or "Gentlemen", which is used in America. Do not use Sirs alone and Gentlemen can not be used in the singular. If the receiver is known to the writer personally, a warm greeting, "Dear Mr. /Ms. sb." is then preferred.

The salutation should be placed two lines below the inside address or the attention line (if



used), and followed by a comma for “Dear Sir”, “Dear Sirs”, and a colon for “Gentlemen”.

5) The body of the letter

This is the most important section of any business letter. Make sure that each paragraph is clear and concise. Start a new paragraph for each point you wish to stress and arrange the paragraphs in logical order so that your letter “reads easily” and moves, step by step, toward the aim or purpose you wish to achieve.

The first paragraph of a letter, mainly being a contact one, should usually be short. It may need to:

- (1) indicate the subject and the purpose of the letter.
- (2) acknowledge any previous correspondence.
- (3) establish a satisfactory tone.

The last paragraph should also be relatively short. It may:

- (1) show friendliness and good will.
- (2) leave the reader with a single clear-cut thought or idea.
- (3) inspire whatever action or response is desired.

It is typed two lines below the salutation, or below the subject line, if any. In letters of average length, paragraphs are single-spaced and between paragraphs double-spacing is used. Very short messages may be double-spaced.

6) The complimentary close

The complimentary close, like the salutation, is simply a matter of custom and a polite way of closing a letter. Leave two lines of space after your last body paragraph, then place the close against the left margin (in fully blocked format), on the right or in the centre of the page (in letters which are in forms other than the full block).

The complimentary close should keep in tone with the salutation. The most commonly used sets of salutation and complimentary close are shown below:

Salutation	Close	Comment
Dear Sir(s)	Yours faithfully,	Formal
Gentlemen	Yours truly, / Truly yours,	Formal
Dear Mr. Harris	Yours sincerely, /Sincerely yours,	Less formal

Also notice that the close is always followed by a comma and only the initial letter of first word is capitalized.

7) The signature

A business letter should be signed by hand and in ink immediately below the complimentary close. The name of the writer is usually typed below the signature and most often includes the writer’s title and/or professional designations. The use of a rubber stamp is a form of discourtesy.

2. The optional parts

The optional parts of a business letter are:

8) The references

The references number and letters enable the writer or the recipient to link the reply with the