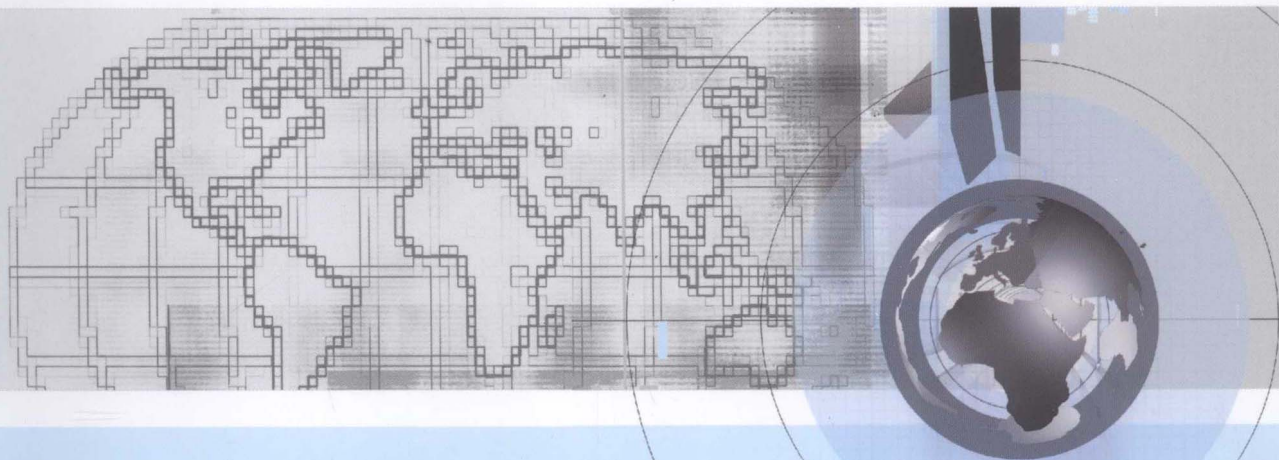





21世纪立体化高等院校规划教材·英语系列

新编外贸英语函电

于翠萍 贝淑华 姜仕倩 主编



ENGLISH

 南京大学出版社



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内 容 简 介

为了便于从事外贸业务和涉外商业谈判的相关人士更好地从事外贸工作,全面了解外贸业务沟通全过程的英语信函沟通知识和表达方式,在积累多年教学经验的基础上,编写了本教材。教材内容包括四个部分,分别为外贸英语函电的基础知识、业务的磋商、合同的履行、外贸函电常用英语缩略语。本教材秉承了书信格式讲究、结构严谨、书面语言完整的特点。

本教材可作为英语专业外经贸方向以及国际贸易专业的教材,还可以作为从事国际贸易工作的读者的自学参考书。

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前言

外贸英语函电并非一门纯理论的课程，该课程没有独立的理论原理，但是又集多门理论课程、应用课程于一体。它既涉及国际贸易理论、市场营销学、消费者心理学等理论知识，又需要掌握英文写作、国际贸易实务、国际商务谈判、销售等应用实践课程的精髓。

外贸英语函电的作用是沟通，是在外贸业务活动中与国外客户构建一座谈判的桥梁，是当前国际业务磋商的主要方式和载体之一。它既涉及对外贸易业务各个环节的知识，又要训练、培养有关业务环节的英语表达能力。沟通的目的是拓展外贸业务，扩大国际业务，所以充分发挥外贸英语函电在外贸业务磋商中的工具作用是十分必要和重要的。

在全球一体化和中国作为出口总量第一、进口总量第二的国际贸易大国的大背景下，我国对于外贸专业人才的需求一直十分旺盛。为了便于从事外贸业务和涉外商业谈判的相关人士更好地从事本职工作，我们组织编写了本教材。本教材的编写人员或有外贸业务从业经验，或多年从事该课程的教学工作，同时在教材的编写过程中还拜访了多家贸易公司的业务人员，浏览了众多知名外贸网站，参考了大量优秀教材。希望借助本教材，让广大读者，尤其是外贸从业人员和从事国际商务的人士，能够全面了解外贸业务沟通全过程的英语信函沟通知识和表达方式，使得大家能够事半功倍地开展外贸业务。

虽然在实践中外贸英语函电的书写呈现出越来越简化、口语化的趋势，但编者认为读者仍然有必要掌握完整、严谨的书写格式和结构，确保表达的完整性和准确性，在实践中熟练掌握业务的基础上做些精简。因此本教材仍然沿袭了传统外贸英语函电教材书信格式讲究、结构严谨、书面语言完整的特点，同时赋予新的时代特色。

本教材的内容结构按照业务谈判的流程进行设置，包括四个部分。第一部分介绍了外贸英语函电的基本知识点，包括书信的构成、格式、书写原则等。第二部分开始进入业务的磋商阶段，进行客户的开发和维护，包括如何与新客户建立业务关系、询盘、报盘、还盘、促销、成交时合同签订等环节。第三部分是合同的履行阶段，涉及付款、包装、装运、保险的办理、售后的处理等每一笔业务的完整履行过程。第四部分是附录，收集了实践中外贸英语函电表达常用的缩略语。各单元涵盖了本单元内容的背景知识、情景书信的写作提纲、6~8篇例信和注解、课后练习。每个单元既有知识点的介绍，又有例信的参考，最后通过练习巩固本单元的主要知识点。

本教材由三江学院的于翠萍、南京林业大学的贝淑华、青岛远洋船员职业学院的姜仕倩任主编，三江学院的郭怀照、天津青年职业学院的郝薇、三江学院的刘珺任副主编。具



体编写分工如下：第1、2、14单元由贝淑华完成，第3~6单元由郭怀照完成，第7~9单元由刘珺完成，第10~13单元由于翠萍完成，附录由郝薇完成，同时感谢参编本教材的姜仕倩、纪卫宁、楚立峰等同仁，他们为本教材的编写提供了指导和参考素材。

由于编者水平有限，书中不妥之处在所难免，恳请广大读者不吝赐教，以便在本教材再版时进行修订和完善。

编 者

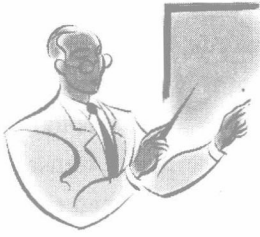
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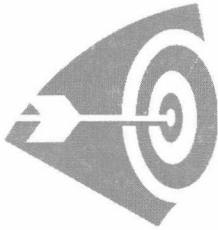


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Unit 1

Fundamentals of Writing Business Letters



- 1.1 General Guidelines
- 1.2 Structure of a Business Letter
- 1.3 The Formats of a Business Letter
- 1.4 Addressing Envelopes
- 1.5 Exercises

1.1 General Guidelines

There are many modern communication methods available today, but the traditional business letter remains an important means of sending printed messages. In this respect, it is good business practice to ensure good quality stationery and printing of the letterhead paper. The business letter also conveys an impression of the company in many other ways.

Developments in technology have made it possible for us to have instant communication all over the world. Speed is now becoming the key to successful business communications. As a result, fax and E-mail messages are taking the place of many business letters. E-mails are also phasing out the use of internal memos, although they still remain popular in some companies.

Whatever method you choose to convey your printed message—by letters, fax, E-mail, memo, etc.—your aim should be to ensure a high standard in all the important areas named above: presentation, structure, language and tone. Remember the importance of giving a first impression. By setting a high standard in the important area of written communications, you will help to create and enhance the corporate image of your organization.

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?

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: principles of writing a business letter—7 Cs 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. What is needed for business letters straightforward and simple English is, if your reader understands you and does what you intent, and then your writing succeeds.

2. Conciseness

Say things in the fewest possible words.

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.

Say things briefly but completely without sacrificing clarity or courtesy. To achieve conciseness of your letter writing, try to keep your statements short, avoid unnecessary wordiness or repetition, and eliminate excessive details.

Paragraphing carefully can make a business letter clearer, easier to read and more attractive to readers. It is a good rule to confine each paragraph to only one point or topic.

3. Courtesy

Courtesy is not mere politeness. The courteous writer should be sincere and careful, 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.

First, courtesy in letter writing refers to employing good human relation skills. It consists, not only in using polite phrases, such as "your esteemed order", "your kind enquiry", but in demonstrating your consideration for your correspondent. Treat the reader with respect and friendliness and sincerity, and be tactful, thoughtful and appreciative.



Second, avoid irritating, offensive or belittling statements. Answer letters promptly, for punctuality will please your recipient who hates waiting for days before he obtains a reply to his letter. Sometimes, discrepancy may occur in business, but with diplomacy and tact it can be overcome and settled without ill will on either side. Never show your anger in a business letter.

Third, you must also adopt the right tone. Before you begin to write, think carefully about the way in which you want to influence your customer. Ask yourself, "What do I write this letter for?" and then express yourself accordingly, being persuasive, apologetic, firm and so on. The right tone may arouse good will, warmth and interest in your reader.

4. Consideration

It emphasizes You-attitude rather than We-attitude.

Keep the reader's request, needs, desires, as well as his feelings in mind. Consideration is another rule of good business communication. The letters you send out must create a good impression. Put yourself in your reader's shoes. Try to imagine his reaction to your letter, that is, consider how he will feel about what you write. Plan the best way to present the message for your reader to receive.

Try to imagine that you are receiving rather than sending the letter. Emphasize the "You" attitude rather than the "I" or "We" attitude. The "You" attitude simply means that you should show respect for your reader's interests in mind, you will be able to write clearly so that no misunderstanding will emerge.

5. Correctness

As applied to a business correspondence, correctness refers to appropriate and grammatically correct language, factual information and accurate reliable figures. Special attention should also be paid to the form and convention, as well as to the content, such as the name of article, specifications, quantity and unit.

It is discourteous to include errors in business letter writing. Therefore, every effort should be made to ensure the accuracy of business communication in various aspects. All the facts and information should be checked and rechecked. Careful attention to details, conscientious proofreading, and the use of reference books will contribute to the reduction of errors in business letter writing.

6. Concreteness

Make your letters specific, definite and vivid. In your letter, you should use either loose or periodic sentences. Use expressions with precise meanings. When you acknowledge a letter, refer to the date, subject and references number (if any). Avoid using vague expressions but correct words.

7. Completeness

Provide all the information and data necessary for a specific issue.

As a commercial communication should be concise, it must include all the relevant



information. Make sure that it does not lack any necessary data that your reader needs to act upon. A business letter that has an incomplete message or information is annoying and costly because it holds up business truncations and duplicates work.

1.2 Structure of a Business Letter

An ordinary business letter consists of fourteen parts:

1. Letterhead

The letterhead expresses the personality of a company and often indicates the writer's company name and 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. Date

The date is generally placed at least two lines below the letterhead to the right or to the left. The date should be typed in full and not abbreviated. There are four methods of writing.

- ① June 5, 2015
- ② 1st October, 2015
- ③ 30 November, 2015
- ④ November 30th, 2015

3. Reference Number

The reference number of letters enables the writer or the recipient to link the reply with previous correspondence. The references may include a file number, department code or the initials of the singer of the letter followed by the typist's initials. They are placed immediately below the letterhead and marked "Your Ref.:" and "Our Ref.:" to avoid confusion.

4. Inside Address

Inside address consists of 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 name of the firm or company addressed to
- ② number and name of the building or house
- ③ number and the name of street
- ④ name of city, state or country and its postal code
- ⑤ name of country



5. Salutation

The salutation is the polite greeting with 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. If the receiver is known to the writer personally, a warm greeting, “Dear Mr. / Ms.” is then preferred. The salutation should be placed two lines below the inside address.

6. Subject Line

The subject line gives a brief introduction of the content of the letter, which is preceded by the word “Subject:” or “Re:”. The subject line is often placed two lines below the salutation and above the body of the letter.

7. Opening Sentence

The opening sentence is 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

8. Body of the Letter

The body of the letter 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 paragraph in logical order so that your letter moves, step by step, toward the aim or purpose you wish to achieve.

9. Closing Sentence

The closing sentence is the last paragraph of the letter, it also should 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

10. Complimentary Close

The complimentary close is merely a polite way of ending a letter. Leave two lines of space after your last body paragraph.

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

Dear Sir (s) ----- Yours faithfully,
Gentlemen ----- Yours truly,
Dear Mr. ----- Yours sincerely,



11. Signature

The signature is the signed name or mark of the person writing the letter or what of the firm he represents. It is written in ink immediately below the complimentary close. Because a signature is the distinguishing mark of one who uses it, the same style must always be adopted. The signature as written and the signature as typed must correspond exactly. Never sign your letters with a rubber stamp.

12. Enclosure

The enclosure indicates that something else accompanying the letter is enclosed. Type the word "Enclosure" or "Enc." at the left bottom with a figure indicating the number of enclosures.

For example:

Enclosure 4:

- ① 1 Invoices
- ② 1 B/Lading
- ③ 1 Photo
- ④ 1 Certificate

13. Carbon Copy Notation

When a copy of a letter is sent to someone other than the person addressed, type c.c. or C.C. two lines below the signature aligned the left margin, followed by the name of the recipient of the copy.

14. Postscript

The postscript is an afterthought, and in formal letter it is usually a sign of poor planning. Try to avoid the use of postscript as far as possible. If something is forgotten, it is better for the writer to rewrite the whole letter. If unavoidable, write in this fashion:

P. S. The invitation will be mailed to you in a day or two.

P. S. ...to see you at the Sales Fair at the London on September 15.

Sample of the structure of a business letter:



Shanghai shenhua imp.&exp. Co., Ltd.
14 floor, 975 hongqiao road, shanghai 200337, China
Tel: 021-62747799 Fax: 021-6274800

Your Ref.:
Our Ref.:
March 8, 2015

Toneveal Products Corp.
17 Mayfield road
Copenhagen, Denmark

Dear Sirs,

Re: establishing business relationship

We have your name and address from the CCPIT and learn that you are interested in Chinese toys. We wish to inform you that we specialize in this line, and would be pleased to enter into trade relations with you.

.....
In case you need more information about our business status, we shall be only too glad to answer at any time.

Yours faithfully,

Shanghai shenhua imp.&exp. Co., Ltd.

Enclosures 2

Cc:

P.S. There are bargains in the price list which I'm sending you.

1.3 The Formats of a Business Letter

Basically, the main styles of a business letter currently used are:

1. Full Block Style

The main characteristic of full block business letters is that everything (except the letterhead) is flush with the left margin with no indentation in the letter. This layout reduces typing time as all typing lines begin at the left margin there are no indentations for new paragraphs or the closing section. But the shortcoming of this form may give the letter a left-heavy appearance and the readers may lose visual balance.



Sample of the full block style:

Shanghai shenhua imp.&exp. co., Ltd.
14 floor, 975 hongqiao road, shanghai 200337, China
Tel: 021-62747799 Fax: 021-6274800

Your Ref.:

Our Ref.:

March 8, 2015

Toneveal Products Corp.
17 Mayfield road
Copenhagen, Denmark

Dear Sirs,

Re: _____

We have your name and address from the CCPIT and learn that you are interested in Chinese toys. We wish to inform you that we specialize in this line, and would be pleased to enter into trade relations with you.

.....

In case you need more information about our business status, we shall be only too glad to answer at any time.

Yours faithfully,

Shanghai shenhua imp.&exp. Co., Ltd.

2. Modified Block Style

The main characteristic of modified block business letters is that everything is flush with the left margin, except the date, the complimentary close and the signature as shown.



Shanghai shenhua imp.&exp. Co., Ltd.
14 floor, 975 hongqiao road, shanghai 200337, China
Tel: 021-62747799 Fax: 021-6274800

Your Ref.:

Our Ref.:

March 8, 2015

Toneveal Products Corp.
17 Mayfield road
Copenhagen, Denmark

Dear Sirs,

Re: _____

We have your name and address from the CCPIT and learn that you are interested in Chinese toys. We wish to inform you that we specialize in this line, and would be pleased to enter into trade relations with you.

.....
In case you need more information about our business status, we shall be only too glad to answer at any time.

Yours faithfully,

Shanghai shenhua imp.&exp. Co., Ltd.

3. Indented Style

Indented style business letters are the same as modified block letters, except the paragraphs are indented and the subject line is centered. The inside name and address is typed in block form, while the date, the complimentary close and the signature are just close to the right of the center.



Shanghai shenhua imp.&exp.Co., Ltd.
14 floor, 975 hongqiao road, shanghai 200337, China
Tel: 021-62747799 Fax: 021-6274800

Your Ref.:
Our Ref.:

March 8, 2015

Toneveal Products Corp.
17 Mayfield road
Copenhagen, Denmark

Dear Sirs,

Re: _____

We have your name and address from the CCPIT and learn that you are interested in Chinese toys. We wish to inform you that we specialize in this line, and would be pleased to enter into trade relations with you.

.....
In case you need more information about our business status, we shall be only too glad to answer at any time.

Yours faithfully,

Shanghai shenhua imp.&exp. Co., Ltd.

1.4 Addressing Envelopes

The envelope should match the stationery in color and style. Envelope addressing calls for accuracy, clearness and good appearance.

Business stationery ordinarily has the return address printed in the upper left corner of the envelope. The name and address of the receiver should be typed about half way down the envelope.

The postmark or stamps should be placed in the up right-hand corner, while the bottom left-hand corner is for post notations such as “confidential”, “certified”, etc.