

全国外经贸院校21世纪高职高专统编教材

对外经贸英语函电

(第四版)

王乃彦 / 主编

Foreign Economic
Relations and Trade
Correspondence (Fourth Edition)



对外经济贸易大学出版社
University of International Business and Economics Press

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

对外经贸英语函电/王乃彦主编. —4 版. —北京:对外
经济贸易大学出版社,2009
全国外经贸院校 21 世纪高职高专统编教材
ISBN 978-7-81134-394-6

I. 对… II. 王… III. 对外贸易-英语-电报信函-写
作-高等学校:技术学校-教材 IV. H315

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2009)第 087859 号

© 2009 年 对外经济贸易大学出版社出版发行

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对外经贸英语函电 (第四版)
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Trade Correspondence (Fourth Edition)

王乃彦 主编

责任编辑:单晓晖 胡小平

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邮购电话:010-64492338 发行部电话:010-64492342
网址:<http://www.uibep.com> E-mail: uibep@126.com

山东省沂南县汇丰印刷有限公司印装 新华书店北京发行所发行
成品尺寸:185mm×260mm 20.5 印张 512 千字
2009 年 8 月北京第 4 版 2009 年 8 月第 1 次印刷

ISBN 978-7-81134-394-6

印数:0 001-5 000 册 定价:32.00 元

修 订 说 明

本书（原名《外贸英语函电》）1982 年出版发行，至今近 30 年来，经过多次修订改编，始终作为全国外经贸院校的外贸英语函电教材被广泛使用，普遍反映是一部好的外贸英语函电教科书。

此次改编的宗旨是：体现国际贸易中新的贸易方式，使教材实用性更强；体现国际贸易专业核心技能的培养，突出函电写作的能力训练；继续体现本教材编写认真严谨的特点，保证一贯的系统性和完整性。此次修订对各章节的信函、注释和练习均有更新；将代理、贸易方式等章节以附录的方式作为辅助材料供教师选择使用；系统介绍了目前国际贸易常用的通讯方式；同时加入了一套完整的业务案例，使读者了解一笔业务的全过程。

新的《对外经贸英语函电》共九章 54 课，附有四个附录。王乃彦任主编，刘长声、李富森任副主编。以下人员参加了改编工作：刘静容、石金花、房玉靖、刘玉玲、孙爱民、陈丽萍、张怡。全书由王乃彦、刘静容总纂定稿。

本书在此次修订改编中，特别注意听取了外贸专业公司及有关部门的意见及建议，并邀请了多年在外贸企业做业务的石金花女士为本书提供了最新内容，在此表示衷心的感谢。

本书属于全国高职高专院校统编教材，也可供部分中职院校和自学者使用。

由于编者水平有限，加之国际贸易情况不断变化，书中的错误和缺点在所难免，希望全国高职高专院校使用本教材的广大读者给予批评指正。

编者

2009 年 1 月

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THE LAYOUT OF A BUSINESS LETTER

Displaying the Letter

Although formality in business letter-writing is rapidly giving way to a less conventional and more friendly style, the layout still follows more or less a set pattern determined by custom. It is safe to follow established practice so as to avoid confusion and waste of time for both sender and receiver.

A good form in letter-writing, like a good form in any other activity, comes from making correct practice habitual. It is a good plan to adopt one form of layout and to stick to it. Basically, two main patterns of layout are in current use — the conventional indented style (vide p2) and the modern blocked style (vide p3).

Following traditional British practice, the indented style takes in five or six spaces in the first line of each paragraph in the body of a letter, though more indentations than these are sometimes preferred. Consistency in use is, however, the important point.

The practice of displaying business letters in the blocked style is now quite common. Its outstanding feature is the commencement of all typing lines, including those for date, inside name and address, salutation, subject heading and complimentary close, at the left-hand margin. The loss of clarity occasioned by the absence of indentations may be made good by the number of separating line-spacing between paragraphs from one to two, as shown on page 3.

1. Indented Form:

**TIANJIN CARPETS IMPORT & EXPORT CORPORATION
45 BAODING STREET, TIANJIN, CHINA**

E-mail: tjcar@public.tpt.tj.cn
Fax: 26320767
Telephone: 31022348

Our Reference No. J/W-CO18
Your Reference No.
Date: 30th November, 2008

Messrs. Williams & Warner
36 Tower Street
Sydney, Australia

Attention: Mr. Arnold Simpson, Sales Department

Dear Sirs,

Re: Sheep Wool

With reference to our Order No. TC303 of 30th September for 50 M/T Sheep Wool, we shall be glad to know when we may expect delivery, as they are urgently required.

When we made the initial enquiry, your department assured us that delivery would only take two months, and we placed the order on that understanding as we wished to have the Wool before the end of November. Your failure to deliver by the promised date has caused us great inconvenience.

Will you please inform us by fax of the earliest possible date when you can deliver these goods. Should the delay be longer than two or three weeks, we shall regretfully have to cancel the order.

Yours faithfully,

Tianjin Carpets Import & Export Corporation

(Sig.) _____
Manager

2. Blocked Form:

**TIANJIN CARPETS IMPORT & EXPORT CORPORATION
45 BAODING STREET, TIANJIN, CHINA**

E-mail: tjcar@ public. tpt. tj. cn
Fax: 26320767
Telephone: 31022348

Our Reference No. J/W-CO18
Your Reference No.

Date: 30th November, 2005

Messrs. Williams & Warner
36 Tower Street
Sydney, Australia

Attention: Mr. Arnold Simpson, Sales Department

Dear Sirs,

Re: Sheep Wool

With reference to our Order No. TC303 of 30th September for 50 M/T Sheep Wool, we shall be glad to know when we may expect delivery, as they are urgently required.

When we made the initial enquiry, your department assured us that delivery would only take two months, and we placed the order on that understanding as we wished to have the Wool before the end of November. Your failure to deliver by the promised date has caused us great inconvenience.

Will you please inform us by fax of the earliest possible date when you can deliver these goods. Should the delay be longer than two or three weeks, we shall regretfully have to cancel the order.

Yours faithfully,
Tianjin Carpets Import & Export Corporation
(Sig) _____

Manager

Placement of the date on the left-hand side of the paper may cause inconvenience when particular letters are required from the files. Because of this, some firms using the blocked style of layout prefer the Reference and the Date to be positioned on the right. An example of a modified blocked style is shown on page 5.

3. Modified Blocked Form

**TIANJIN CARPETS IMPORT & EXPORT CORPORATION
45 BAODING STREET, TIANJIN, CHINA**

E-mail: tjcar@public.tpt.tj.cn

Fax: 26320767

Telephone: 31022348

Our Reference No. J/W-CO18

Your Reference No.

Date: 30th November, 2008

Messrs. Williams & Warner

36 Tower Street

Sydney, Australia

Attention: Mr. Arnold Simpson, Sales Department

Dear Sirs,

Re: SHEEP WOOL

With reference to our Order No. TC303 of September for 50 M/T Sheep Wool, we shall be glad to know when we may expect delivery as these are urgently required.

When we made the initial enquiry, your department assured us that delivery would only take two months, and we placed the order on that understanding as we wished to have the WOOL before the end of November. Your failure to deliver by the promised date has caused us great inconvenience.

Will you please inform us of the earliest possible date when you can deliver these goods. Should the delay be longer than two or three weeks, we shall regretfully have to cancel the order.

Yours faithfully,

Tianjin Carpets Import & Export Corporation

(Sig) _____
Manager

Whether the indented style or the blocked style is used is determined by personal taste or by a firm's preference, but whichever style is used, an ordinary business letter consists of seven parts:

- (1) the letter head
- (2) the reference and date
- (3) the inside name and address
- (4) the salutation
- (5) the message, or body of the letter
- (6) the complimentary close
- (7) the writer's signature

A common fault is to type a letter too high on the paper. It should neither be too high or too low, but nicely placed to preserve an appearance of balance, even if your letter might contain some more parts such as:

- (8) the attention line
- (9) the subject line
- (10) the reference notation
- (11) the enclosure
- (12) the carbon copy notation
- (13) the postscript

However faultless a business letter may be on subject matter, style and tone, it will not only create a bad impression but also weaken its effect if it is not attractively displayed. The following letter is designed to illustrate the position of each part mentioned above.

1

**BEIJING LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
PRODUCTS IMPORT & EXPORT CORPORATION**

Tel: (010)66668888

E-mail: bjlipc@yahoo.com.cn

2

Our Ref: 038/te

Your Ref: QYT/zcs

Date: April 9, 2008

3

P & H Company
8000 Lincoln Drive
New York, NY 1122

8

Attention: Import Dept.

4

Dear Sirs,

9

Cotton Sweaters

5

We thank you for your letter of March 28.

As requested, we are sending you herewith a copy of our latest price list for your reference.

Please note that all prices are understood to be subject to our final confirmation.

We are looking forward to your specific enquiry.

6

Yours faithfully,

BEIJING LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS
IMP. & EXP. CORPORATION

7

Z. G. Wang
Manager

10 ZGW/bk

11 Encl. : as stated

12 cc: our branch offices

13 P. S. Your letter of the 2nd April has just arrived. We will look into the matter and reply to you soon.

1. The Letter head (信头)

The letter head includes the essential particulars about the writer, his name, postal address, telephone number, and fax number. Good quality paper and a neat, well-balanced letter head combine to enhance the prestige of the firm that uses it.

2. The Reference and Date (档案号和日期)

Most letter heads provide for reference letters and numbers. When one firm writes to another, both will give a reference and they are marked with 'Our ref: ' and 'Your ref: ' to avoid confusion. Sometimes a rectangle or other space is provided for them in the printed heading.

Quite commonly, and especially in small offices, the reference consists of no more than the initials of the person dictating the letter followed by those of the typist:

Our ref: LGB/ww

Your ref: JDM/je

Such kind of reference may be placed two spaces below the typed signature at the left margin, i. e. , the position indicated by 'the reference notation'.

The date should be typed two line-spacings below the letter head and, in the indented form of layout, so placed to the right that the last figure serves as a guide for line-endings in the body of the letter, though other placements are now accepted. It should always be typed in full and never abbreviated. Never give the date in figures e. g. 10/2/2005, which could easily be confusing.

Whether commas or full stops are used in dates is accepted as a matter of taste, but the inclusion of a comma after the month with no full stop after the year is now customary, e. g.

24th March, 2005 (British style)

March 24, 2005 (American style)

3. The Inside Name and Address (封内名称及地址)

The preferred position for the recipient's name and address is the upper left-hand side of the sheet, three or more line-spacings below the line of the date, depending on the length of the letter.

Mr. , Mrs. , Miss, Ms. , and Messrs. are the ordinary courtesy titles used for addressing the recipient.

It is the usual practice to type the inside name and address in a blocked paragraph form in alignment with the left-hand margin of the letter. This helps to give the letter a tidy appearance.

4. The Salutation (称呼)

The salutation is the complimentary greeting with which the writer opens his letter. The particular form used depends upon the writer's relationship with his recipient. To some extent it settles the form of the complimentary close; the two must always match.

For ordinary business purposes, Dear Sir (or Dear Madam for both single and married women) is used for addressing a person, and Dear Sirs or Gentlemen (or Mesdames) for addressing two or more readers when a letter is sent to a firm.

The salutation always appears on a line by itself, conventionally three line-spacings below the inside name and address, and followed by a comma for "Dear Sirs" and a colon for "Gentlemen".

5. The Body of the Letter (信文)

This is the part that really matters. When writing, pay attention to the following:

- (a) Write simply, clearly, courteously, grammatically, and to the point.
- (b) Paragraph correctly, confining each paragraph to one topic.
- (c) See that your typing is accurate and the display artistic. Aim at attractive and pleasing appearance for your letters. Margins are especially important, since they serve to "frame" your letter.

For very short letters you may adopt double line-spacings except for your recipient's name and address for which single line-spacing should always be used.

6. The Complimentary Close (结尾敬语)

The complimentary close, like the salutation, is purely a matter of convention and a polite way of ending a letter. The expression used must be appropriate to the occasion and be in keeping with the salutation.

The following are the usual matches used in modern business letters.

<u>Salutation</u>	<u>Close</u>	<u>Occasion</u>
Dear Sir(s)	Yours faithfully	standard and formal closure
Dear Madam	Yours faithfully	for business letters
Gentlemen	Yours truly	used by Americans
Dear Mr. Smith	Your sincerely	used less formally and between persons known to each other

Inverted forms like “Faithfully yours”, “Truly yours” or “Sincerely yours” are also used for less formal business letters but are considered somewhat forced and artificial.

The complimentary close must never be separated from the substance of a letter by being carried to a separate sheet. Line spacing or word spacing should be re-arranged on the computer to keep it on the same sheet with the body of the letter or carry some portion of the letter to the next sheet. When using continuation sheets, plain paper of the same quality as the letter-head must be used and typed with a heading to show:

- (a) the number of the sheet (in the centre of the page) ,
- (b) the name of your recipient (on the left-hand side) ,
- (c) the date of the letter (on the right-hand side) , e. g.

- 2 -
L. A. Brizier & Co. Ltd.
1st March 19

7. The Signature (署名)

The signature is the signed name or mark of the person writing the letter or that of the firm he represents. It is written in ink immediately below the complimentary close. Because a signature is the distinguishing mark of the one who uses it, the same style must always be adopted.

The signatures written and typed must correspond exactly.

Never sign your letters with a rubber stamp.

8. The Attention Line (注意事项)

The phrase ‘For the attention of ’ or simply ‘Attention’ is used where the writer of a letter addressed to an organization wishes to direct it to a particular official. It is typed two line-spacings above the salutation, underlined and, except with the fully-blocked letter-style, centred over the body of the letter, e. g.

For the Attention of Mr. Smith

or

Attention: Mr. Smith

9. The Subject Line (事由)

- (a) Main heading: (主标题)

Often useful as a time-saver is the practice of including at the head of a letter a short title