


陈淑梅 编著

# B 实用外贸英语函电

**Business**

**Correspondence**

 广西师范大学出版社

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## 图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

实用外贸英语函电 / 陈淑梅编著. — 桂林: 广西师范大学出版社, 2002. 9

ISBN 7-5633-3699-0

I. 实… II. 陈… III. 对外贸易—英语—电报信函—写作 IV. H315

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2002) 第 067929 号

广西师范大学出版社出版发行

( 桂林市育才路 15 号 邮政编码:541004 )  
( 网址:<http://www.bbtpress.com.cn> )

出版人: 萧启明

全国新华书店经销

广西师范大学出版社印刷厂印刷

( 广西桂林市临桂县金山路 168 号 邮政编码:541100 )

开本: 787 mm × 960 mm 1/16

印张: 7.875 字数: 180 千字

2002 年 9 月第 1 版 2002 年 9 月第 1 次印刷

印数: 0 001 ~ 3 000 定价: 15.80 元

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如发现印装质量问题, 影响阅读, 请与印刷厂联系调换。

# 前言

随着我国加入 WTO,外贸人才短缺问题凸现。经济的全球化与国际化更呼唤新型外贸人才。外贸函电一直是对外经贸业务和有关活动的重要工具,掌握和运用外贸函电的基本知识是外贸从业人员必须具备的条件。在当今的国际商务中,传统的贸易方式和电子商务并存。《实用外贸英语函电》一书除了系统介绍传统的贸易方式外,还结合近年来电子商务的广泛使用,力图满足我国加入 WTO 之后对新型的外贸人才的需求。

作为一本专门用途的外贸函电教材,《实用外贸英语函电》涵盖了对外经贸过程的主要环节,既有传统的信件基本格式,又有当今流行的电子邮件的表达方式。《实用外贸英语函电》在编写过程中,征求了外贸从业人员的意见,力求突出其实用性和可操作性;并结合语言学习的特点,将阅读与写作相结合,每个单元在介绍了基本的相关知识之后,列举典型的范例,设置一系列练习,由易至难,从 Sample-based Exercises, Situation-based Writing, 直至 Free Writing, 以期让学习者掌握函电的基本写作方法和思路。

《实用外贸英语函电》一书的初稿在东南大学外贸英语专业进行了两年的试用,并经过外贸专业人员的审定。

本书适用于英语及外经贸专业的学生,以及有一定英语基础并有志于从事外贸工作的人员使用。

本书的编者向在本教材试用中提出宝贵意见的同行和学生们表示谢意。在本书的编写过程中,得到了东南大学外语系主任李霄翔教授的帮助、指导和支持,在此表示衷心的感谢。

本书编写中汲取了国内外专家和学者的方法,参考了一些专著和论文,书中未能一一注明,在此向有关专家和学者表示谢意。由于编者的水平有限,书中难免存在错误和不妥之处,恳请各位专家、同行和使用者优先提出批评和建议。在此,向各位表示衷心的感谢。

编者

2002年8月于南京东南大学

# C ontents

<b>Unit 1</b>	Lead-in — Business Letters .....	(1)
<b>Unit 2</b>	Memos & E-mails .....	(12)
<b>Unit 3</b>	Identifying Business Partners .....	(19)
<b>Unit 4</b>	Status Inquiry .....	(25)
<b>Unit 5</b>	Inquiries & Replies .....	(32)
<b>Unit 6</b>	Offers & Counteroffers .....	(38)
<b>Unit 7</b>	Orders & Their Fulfillment .....	(44)
<b>Unit 8</b>	Terms of Payment .....	(52)
<b>Unit 9</b>	Packing & Transport .....	(60)
<b>Unit 10</b>	Insurance .....	(67)
<b>Unit 11</b>	Complaints & Replies .....	(73)
<b>Unit 12</b>	Sales Letters .....	(78)
<b>Unit 13</b>	Trade Intermediaries .....	(83)
<b>Unit 14</b>	International Investment .....	(90)
<b>Unit 15</b>	Counter Trade .....	(96)
<b>Appendix Answers</b>	.....	(103)

# U nit 1

## Lead-in Business Letters

### Introduction

English is considered the business language in the world; while communication is the lifeline of modern business. Generally speaking, correspondence—the exchange of letters — can be grouped in three major categories, which reflect different purposes: the business life, the personal life, and the working life. The focus of this course is on business writing, whose main types are as follows:

*Letters* — for external correspondence;

*Memos* — for internal correspondence;

*Telegrams* and *telexes* — seldom used now;

*Fax* — the message of a fax is the same as that of a letter, which is usually sent by the post; while the fax is sent by a fax machine at far greater speed.

*E-mails* — for both internal and external correspondence, which is

gaining great popularity nowadays.

This course will be centered primarily on letter writing in international trade.

## Parts of a Business Letter

### 1. The standard parts of a business letter:

- (1) **Heading or return address** — the letterhead is the printed or engraved heading on an organization's sheet of stationery, which may include the following elements:
  - logo or trademark or symbol or slogan;
  - full legal name of the organization;
  - full address of the organization or the branch and other necessary data, including telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address;
  - name of director(s) if necessary;
  - starting date of the firm if it needs to be specified, indicating that the firm has a long history.
- (2) **Date line** — the date is usually below the heading, more often written as one of the following; 8(th) September (or Sept.) 2002; September (or Sept.) 8(th), 2002, but to avoid using figures such as 9/8/2002, as it might be read as September 8, 2002 or August 9, 2002, which will cause unnecessary confusion. Never write *of* in the date (5th of May).
- (3) **Inside address** — it's usually the same as the outside address on the envelope. If the window envelope is used, there is, of course, no need to write the outside one. The address is arranged like a pyramid, starting from the smallest unit, e.g. the room number, to the largest unit, e.g. the name of the country. If the letter is addressed to an individual, the inside address will include that person's courtesy title — professional title, such as 'Dr' or 'Prof.', or the traditional title, such as *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Miss*, and *Ms* and the name, which are put on the top line of the address. That person's business or executive title — such as *CEO*, *General Manager* — is usually placed on the second line of

the inside address. If the letter is addressed to a group, the inside address will consist of the full group name and the address. The following are two examples:

Example 1	
Name	Mr. S. Johnson
Organization	Casual Hotel
Road	18 Zhongshan Road
Town/City Postcode	Suzhou 240000
County/Province	Jiangsu
Country	P. R. China

Example 2	
Group	BCE College
Road	2 Central Avenue
Town/City Postcode	Suzhou 240000
County/Province	Jiangsu
Country	P. R. China

If you are writing to a company containing one or more personal names, you can put *Messrs* before the name of the company:

*Messrs David Young and Co. Ltd*

*Messrs Johnson & Sons*

If the company does not contain a personal name, *The* is usually written before it:

*The South Travel Association*

If you are writing to a person who has a particular position, write *The* before the position:

*The Manager*

*The President*

(4) **Salutation** — the friendly greeting that is placed just under the



inside address. If the letter is addressed to an individual, it usually consists of: Dear + Courtesy Title or Business Title + Surname. If the letter is sent to a group/a company, it is customary to use: *Dear Sirs* (BrE), or *Gentlemen* (AmE). To solve the sex question in letter writing, use *Dear Sir or Madam / Ladies and Gentlemen*, or use the title of the person addressed: *Dear President*, the same idea can be used when writing to a company: *Dear Local Sanitary Service*.

- (5) **Message/Text** — it's the most important part of the letter, which directly follows the salutation. The message can be as short as a one-sentence paragraph and as long as several pages with an opening paragraph and a closing paragraph and many other paragraphs in between.
- (6) **Complimentary close** — the words that come immediately after the body and directly before the signature to indicate the writer's regards to the receiver, signaling the conclusion of the letter. The words often used are: truly, sincerely, and faithfully. If you begin your letter with *Dear Sir or Madam*, that is, if you are writing to a stranger, then you must end with *Yours faithfully*. If you are writing to someone whose name you know, or someone has written to you, you end with *Yours sincerely*. Generally, the typical American forms are: Best regards, Sincerely; the more typical British forms are: Best wishes, Kind regards, Yours sincerely and Yours faithfully.
- (7) **Signature area** — this area may include the following: your signature, your typewritten name, your business title and the name of your branch and/or that of your company. If the person who has dictated the letter is not present to sign it, the typist or someone else will sign it instead. In this case, the usual practice is to write the letters p. p. or per pro (= on behalf of) before the name of the person signing the letter.

## 2. The optional parts of a business letter

- (1) **Personal or confidential notation** — if the letter is personal or confidential, type Personal or Confidential in all-capital letters

or in underscored capital and small letters on the second line below the date, starting at the left margin.

- (2) **Attention line** — it is used if you want to bring your letter to the attention to a particular person or a department when you address this letter to an organization. It is usually typed two lines below the inside address and two lines above the salutation.
- (3) **Subject line** — this line states briefly what this letter is about so that your reader would get the main idea before he reads it in detail and it also facilitates filing.
- (4) **Reference line** — carrying a file, order or policy number placed one to four lines below the date.
- (5) **Executive and secretary/typist initials** — they usually appear at the left margin on the same line with the last line of the signature areas or one or two lines below that to indicate responsibilities.
- (6) **Enclosure (s)** — if you include anything else more than the message in the envelope, you need to specify clearly so that the person who prepares for mailing will not forget, and if more than one item are enclosed, you need to indicate the number as well by writing it after the word enclosures. This would also help the receiver to check for the enclosure(s) when the letter arrives at his end.
- (7) **Copy notation** — when you have sent a copy of this letter to a third party and you need the receiver to know it, you will write the name of that third party after the abbreviation “cc” (carbon copy) or “xc” (Xerox copy).
- (8) **Mailing notation / notation of delivery** — when the deadline is required for a particular purpose, or where necessary, the mailing means, such as *Registered*, need to be indicated in the letter. It is usually typed in capital letters flush with the left margin about two lines above the inside address.
- (9) **Postscript** — to call the receiver’s attention to something important which you have already mentioned in the letter or to add something that is not related to the letter itself. But if you forget something important and relevant to the letter, better insert it in the appropriate place and reprint the letter.

## Formats for Letters

Two standard formats being used in recent years are the block format and modified block. In the *block style*, all parts of the letter are flush left with appropriate spacing between each part of the letter, and the paragraphs are not indented (Please see example in Sample Letter below).

The *modified block* format may center the heading but more commonly places it in the upper right corner of the type area. Paragraphs may or may not be indented and the complimentary close and the signature touch the right margin.

Southeast Travel  
Head Office  
5th Floor  
World Trade Mansion  
Nanjing  
Tel: 086-025-9966888

Mr. S. Johnson  
Water Close  
Sydney

5 July 2002

Your ref: 5SJ  
Our ref: 0268  
Dear Mr. Johnson  
Re: Mortgage Account

Thank you for your letter of 1 July and we learn that you would like details of the building coverage.

We enclose herewith a booklet detailing the premium rates for standard and additional cover.

Please let us know what particular cover(s) you would require so that we can make necessary arrangements accordingly.

Yours sincerely  
M. Smith  
Manager of Insurance Section

The American Management Association developed **the simplified format recently**: the salutation and complimentary close are omitted, but a subject line is essential. For example:

March 18, 2000

Dandan Bookstore

20 Huixin Dongjie

Beijing 100029

### **BOOK ORDER**

Please send me one copy of College English. My check for RMB 12.00 is enclosed.

Sue Wang

12 Zhongshan Road

Nanjing 210021

Enclosure: RMB 12.00 check.

## **Guidelines for Writing a Letter**

1. *A successful letter* is one that wins a favorable response — the success of the letter is judged by the response. Let the response you desire be your guide throughout the letter.
2. *You-attitude*: let your reader's interest be your guide in selecting and phrasing of ideas.
3. *Expression skill*: try to use expression in English that is clear, persuasive, natural, thoughtful, and interesting.
4. *Avoiding* these expressions (as they are considered as clichéd expressions):  
as regards, at your earliest convenience, awaiting, we await, beg, duly noted, esteemed, recent date, trusting that this is satisfactory,

valued, we are, we remain, we trust, we wish to, with due regard,  
with reference to the matter.

## Sample Letter

Southeast Travel  
Head Office  
5th Floor  
World Trade Mansion  
Nanjing  
Tel: 086-025-9966888

Mr. S. Johnson  
Water Close  
Sydney

5 July, 2002

Your ref: 5SJ

Our ref: 0268

Dear Mr. Johnson

Re: Mortgage Account

Thank you for your letter of 1 July, and we learn that you would like details of the building coverage.

We enclose herewith a booklet detailing the premium rates for standard and additional cover.

Please let us know what particular cover(s) you would require so that we can make necessary arrangements accordingly.

Yours sincerely

Mr. Smith  
Manager of Insurance Section

Study the above model letter and answer the questions individually or in pairs:

1. What are the name, address, and telephone number of the company from which the letter is sent?
2. When was the letter written?
3. What is the inside address?

4. What is the writer's reference number?
5. What is the subject of the letter?
6. Who wrote the letter?
7. What is the position of the writer of the letter?
8. What is the purpose of writing this letter?
9. What is the main idea of the letter?
10. What is the possible relationship between the writer and the receiver of the letter?


 Terms & Expressions

logo	<i>n.</i>	标识
trademark	<i>n.</i>	商标
slogan	<i>n.</i>	标识语, 口号
branch	<i>n.</i>	分部, 分公司
courtesy title		礼节上的尊称
business or executive title		官衔
CEO (Chief Executive Officer)		首席执行官
salutation	<i>n.</i>	称呼
Messrs. (Mr. 的复数)	<i>n.</i>	先生们
complimentary close		表敬意的结尾
signature	<i>n.</i>	签名
confidential <i>adj.</i>		机密的
enclosure	<i>n.</i>	附件
optional	<i>adj.</i>	可任意选择的
file	<i>v.</i>	把……归档, 备案
block format		齐头式
mortgage	<i>n.</i>	抵押
coverage	<i>n.</i>	承保险别
premium	<i>n.</i>	保险费
clichéd	<i>adj.</i>	陈词滥调的
re	<i>prep.</i>	关于, 事由

**Exercises**

1. The following is a summary of the parts of a business letter. Fill in the blanks by referring to the introduction of this unit, some of which have been given as examples:

Sections	Major Elements	Standard/ Optional
1. <b>The Heading</b>	1. Letterhead—_____ address 2. Date line—the month, day and year	Standard _____
2. <b>The Opening</b>	3. Personal or confidential notation (the second line below the date) 4. Reference line (one to four lines below the date) 5. Inside address 6. Attention line—directing the letter to a specific person (by name or by title) (below the inside address) 7. S _____	Optional _____ Standard _____ Standard
3. <b>The Body</b>	8. S _____ line (the second line below the salutation) 9. Message/_____	Standard
4. <b>The Closing</b>	10. Complimentary _____ (the second line below the message) 11. Company signature—the name of the company in all-capital letters on the second line below the complimentary closing) Writer's identification — the signature, the written name and _____ of the writer 12. Reference _____ — the writer's and /or the typist's initial (the second line below the writer's identification) 13. Enclosure notation (below the reference initials) 14. Mailing notation (below the enclosure notation or the reference initials) 15. _____ notation (below delivery notation) 16. Postscript (PS)	_____ Optional _____ Optional _____ Optional _____ Optional

2. Suppose you are going to set up your own business, design your own letterhead and then write a simple letter to tell one of your friends about your new business using the letterhead you have just designed (This can be done as a group work; first discuss what kind of business you would like to be in, then give a full name to your business organization, locate it wherever you like, put any logo or symbol and /or slogan where necessary and finally add any other data you like to your letterhead. Then write a short letter together to tell one of your friends about your new business).



# Unit 2

## Memos & E-mails

### Introduction

#### Memos

A memo (short for memorandum, often-called interoffice memorandum) is drafted for internal purposes and meets the need for fast internal communication within the company. Memos are often used to inform someone of the state of things at a particular moment, and alternative courses of action may be recommended. Memos can be addressed to a superior, a subordinate or a group of people concerned. The main difference from a conversation or a phone call is that the reader of a memo will be given time to think over his reactions and will keep this document in his files for future references if necessary. They also differ from ordinary letters. They follow the basic principles of letter writing, though they are usually more direct, concise and less formal than letters. The opening and closing phrases are omitted. Although the style may vary according to the addressee (s), there are however basic rules one should observe when drafting a