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貿易英文

書信手冊

Practical English Handbook For Trading

現代商貿人仕

不可缺工具

訂貨、裝運

信函文件、詢價、貿易通信

國際語言出版

付款、訴訟、索賠

90

貿易英文

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壹

基礎篇

§ 緒 論

在英國與美國，所謂 Commercial Correspondence* 或 Business Correspondence 主要是指國內商業交易用的通信；尤其在美國，重點是放在對一般消費者推銷製造品或經銷商品的信函 (Sales Letters)，而不放在公司與公司間的交易之業務信函。又在美國，除信函以外如果還包括商業上公告或報告文件以及採取信函體裁的廣告文等時則稱之為 Business Writing。

在我國，以英文書寫的商業信函中，有關貿易交易的信函佔了大部份，因而有時稱其為貿易英文。一般的推銷信函 (Sales Letters) 之寄遞對象大多不特定，又其所屬之社會階層、職業、性別、年齡等都不同；但貿易信函則原則上是從事貿易的公司對公司或製造廠商的信函。因而發函者與受函者都是與貿易有關的業者，由而常使用不必說明就能互相瞭解的國際性術語或慣用詞句。又發函者與受函者都非某某個人而是公司，所以應避免使用俗句或寫得太不客氣。由而常說要 formal (不可太親暱) 或要有 dignity (莊重)。再者，英文的貿易通信對象不一定是以英文為母語，並且常涉及權利義務及利害得失，所以其用字應非常慎重以免產生誤解，須用容易理解的正常英文，以期其正確無誤並清楚不含糊。

在英美，尤其在美國所倡導的 business letter writing 的原理技巧，我們不應該全部無批判無條件地接納入我國的貿易信函。固然，美英兩國具有獨特歷史背景，並且是以母國文字所做的通信，所以當然有極多優秀的創意與研究成果。我們應該向其學習者固然不少，但仍應判斷其適用與否，由而尋找合於我國情的貿易信函體裁。

* 在美國多用 business 而少用 commercial，很少稱 commercial letters，而多稱 business letters 又 Commercial English 的對稱是 Business English。

第1章 貿易英文書信之形式

§ 1. 紙 張

貿易信函通常使用白色無格子的紙張，為醒目起見，有時使用色紙，此時應使用淺色的，因深色紙張上的印字較難閱讀。原則上應使用白色紙。國內所用紙張大多較外國來函用紙薄，我們應該注意使用在處理及保存上充分耐用的紙張。

§ 2. 外觀的重要性

信函的外觀猶如人的服裝。由服裝可判斷人的人品，同樣，由一封信的外觀也可大體看出該發函公司的情況。接到亂雜的信件時，我們不會認為該發函公司是經營健全能夠信賴的好公司。所以不能輕視形式，認為形式怎樣都無所謂。如果某公司來的信件一直是形式正確，漂亮整然，我們自然產生對該公司的信賴感。因而美國的書籍常強調信函的外觀給人的第一印象之重要性。

美國的大公司常嚴格訓練信函繕寫人員，某學者曾調查其訓練目標所在，分析如下：

公司的方針	82%
Form Letters ⁽¹⁾ 的使用法	76%
信函的標準形式	71%
受函者本位之立場 (Viewpoint of the reader)	71%

Form Paragraphs ⁽²⁾ 的利用	53%
新鮮自然的用字法	41%
有該公司個性的文體	35%
標點符號	29%
拼字	12%
文法	12%

(註)(1)所謂 form letters 是指商業書信中，某些類似信函須要多次發出者而言——所謂 routine letters 大多屬此——乃預先擬好基本信函全文，到時視情況將不同的部份，例如日期、品名、數量、金額等填入就可發出的信函。可歸納成數種常書寫的信函內容類型，準備數種基本的信函。

(2)form paragraphs 是就信函中各段內容，將相同類型的分類出來，書寫時將之作適當銜接就能成為一封信函者。有時稱為 Automatic Letter Writer。

由上面分析可知道，首要者是切實認識公司的營業方針，然後將其反映在信函上，同時要非常地重視信函的形式，它的重要性可於「信函的標準形式」一項⁽¹⁾第三位 71% 看出來。

§ 3. 美觀與正確的形式

為使信函整個看起來美觀，必須把整個信函文字排列得很整齊。左邊空白的境界線 (marginal line)，使用打字機打，當然能垂直整齊，但右邊 marginal line 則無法如此，有若干出入雖然不得已，但宜盡量使其接近垂直。上下左右的空白 (margins) 要留得適度，盡量使信函構成平衡的配置。有些人將字打得滿滿一張紙，不但讀起來吃力，要歸檔 (file) 時連打孔空白都沒有，令人有寒酸之感。有些教科書指示左邊的空白應在 $\frac{1}{2}$ 英寸至 $1\frac{1}{2}$ 英寸之間，右邊則稍窄即可，左邊要考慮到歸檔之需。不過，此點宜不要作死板規定，而應同時考慮到信文的長短作適當的調節。又遇到極短的信文時應考慮使用空一行的 double space。總之，信文的排列配置應該像在畫框中放置圖畫或照片一樣，注意到上下左右的 margin 之平衡，使其具有安定感。

信函的形式並非有一定不變與不可違反的規則，而是由需要與一般習慣所形成，並且隨時代而變遷。有時甚至因個人的喜好或特殊目的而採行特殊怪異的形式。不過，信函尤其貿易書信的正确形式是國際慣例所肯定，而自然形成的一種規範。對於形式的細節固然因人而多少有意見之不同，但現代商業信函之形式係配合

打字機之使用並基於需要而形成，對貿易英文書信之形式大部分作者的意見在基本項目而言是一致的。

§ 4. 構 成

a. 構成要素

- (1) 信頭 (Letterhead)
- (2) 發函日期 (Date)
- (3) 信內地址 (Inside Address)
- (4) 信頭敬稱 (Salutation)
- (5) 本文 (Body of Letter)
- (6) 結辭 (Complimentary Close)
- (7) 簽名 (Signature)

〈註〉此處本文稱之為 body 是做為信函形式上一個要素的稱呼，本來的書信本文應稱為 message.

cf. The body of the letter contains the message.

以上七要素是構成貿易信函的基本部分，而以下所列的是因信函內容之不同或因情形不同而附加的部分。

- (8) 參考文號 (Reference Number)
- (9) 特定地址〔稱呼〕 (Particular Address)
- (10) 主旨 (Letter Subject)
- (11) 鑑別記號 (Identification Marks)
- (12) 附件記號 (Enclosure Remarks or Directions)
- (13) 副本寄送單位記號 (Carbon Copy Notations)
- (14) 附啓 (Postscript: P.S.)

〈註〉美國有一 National Office Management Association 團體提倡一種 Simplified Letters，把 Salutation 及 Complimentary Close 認為是沒意義、而建議與予刪除。但在貿易信函，這種過度的改變難令吾人贊成。

b. 構成要素的排列格式

上述書信各要素的排列格式通常可分為下列數種：

1) *Indented Form* (縮進式)

Indented 是行首有出入 (*indentation*) 之意，亦即 *Inside Address* 和 *Signature* 兩部份的各行首依次向右挪若干字，又本文各段的第一行也向右縮進若干字的方式。這是英國長久以來所用的方式，可說是正統的格式。*Indentation* 的字數 (*spaces*) 是三字到十字，但 *Inside Address* 及 *Signature* 部份也宜避免 *indentation* 太深以致難看，又各行依次的 *indentation* 宜有相同 *spaces*。另本文中各段 *indentation* 的起首要排列整齊。

2) *Block Form* (垂直型；整齊排列形)

此格式是 *Inside Address*、*Complimentary Close*、*Signature* 部份以及本文各行的起首都垂直地排列整齊的方式。此格式據說是美國人所想出來，打字上效率較高，美國多使用此格式。

3) *Modified Block Form* (*or Semiblock Form*) (折衷型)

上面兩種格式之折衷的格式，即 *Inside Address* 與 *Signature* 的兩部份之各行起首垂直地排整齊，而本文各段的第一行則有 *indentation* 的格式。貿易書信上，此格式現在最廣泛被使用。

4) *Extreme Block Form* (*or Full-Block Form*) (全齊頭式)

這是在美國想出來的較新格式，是將信函各部份的各行起首全部對左端的 *marginal line* 垂直地排整齊的方法。打字的效率最好，但信函的各部份都偏向左端，有失之於欠缺安定感之缺點。

以上四種格式中，由打字效率、信函美觀、閱讀方便來看，*Block Form* 或 *Modified Block Form* 似較適合貿易信函。

〈註〉除上述格式外，另有 *Overhanging Indentation* (懸段式) 又稱 *Suspended-Line Style* 的格式。亦即在本文各段，使用與 *Indented Form* 相反的 *indentation*，就是將各段第二行以下的行首向右縮進若干字的方式。由於第一行顯得由第二行以下突出來，所以稱為 *Overhanging Indentation*。這種格式不應該使用於貿易信函的書寫。

有些人打出來的信函，各段間的 *space* 很窄，和各段中各行間的 *space* 相同，以致較難閱讀。所以各段間的 *space* 應該大一點。各行間隔如為 *single space*，則各段間應該用 *double space*，各行間如為 *double space*，則各段間至少要用 *triple space* 才可以。

c. 信函的格式與標點符號

信函的標點符號有 Close (或 Closed) Punctuation 和 Open Punctuation 兩種。

Close Punctuation 是不但在 Salutation 與 Complimentary Close 後面加句點，連發函日期後面也加句點，Inside Address 與 Signature 部份的最後行末也加句點，又在這兩部份的其他行末則加逗點的方式。

Open Punctuation 是把 Date、Inside Address 以及 Signature 部份的各行末之句點省略的方式。但這些部份的各行內之逗點及本文的句點以及略字的簡寫記號點則不變動。極端的 Open Punctuation 則連 Salutation 及 Complimentary Close 的句點有時也省略不打，但在貿易信函宜避免如此。適度的 Open Punctuation 從打字的效率，以及看起來句點少較清爽，對貿易書信似最適宜。

〈註〉(1)Punctuation 的格式請參照 d. 的格式

(2)Close Punctuation 時宜注意不要忘打 Inside Address 第一行末段的逗點。

(3)在分項的數字或標題打 period，例如，“12. Reply to Inquiry Respecting Sales of Ground.”，或如下例在分項的各行都加 period 的應該是屬於 Close Punctuation，此時如省掉表示項目別的數字與各行末的 period 就成為 Open Punctuation。

Since this loan has been paid in full, we are forwarding to you with this letter the following documents:

①Note.

②Deed of trust.

③Extension agreement.

④Old first mortgage.

⑤Old first mortgage bonds.

⑥ABC Fire Insurance Company Policy 99321.

We sent the abstract of title directly to the Federal Land Bank of Birmingham on January 20.

(4)從日常往來信函不難發現，頗多情形是在 Date 或 Inside Address 使用 Close Punctuation，而在 Signature 部份則變成 Open Punctuation，形成不統一的標點符號用法，可說是 Mixed Punctuation。為避免此事，也宜採用 Open Punctuation。

d.構成要素的配置格式

【例 1】 Indented Form, Close Punctuation

TAWU TRADING CO., LTD.

HEAD OFFICE
"TAWU TRADE" TAIPEI
P.O. BOX 177 TAIPEI
TOKYO BRANCH
"TAWU TRADE" TOKYO
P.O. BOX NIKONBASHI 90 TOKYO

TAINAN BRANCH
IMPORTERS & EXPORTERS
22 CHUNG-CHENG ST., TAINAN
C. P. O. BOX NO. 163

CABLES: "TAWU TRADE" TAINAN
PHONES: TAINAN 23161/63652
CODES: A.B.C. 5TH & 6TH ACME
BENTLEY'S COMPLETE PHRASE
ORIENTAL 3-LETTER
SCHOFIELD'S 3-LETTER
& PRIVATE

Your Ref.

Our Ref. PS/34

31st August, 1987

Messrs. Kapur & Co.,
28 Kaimur Street,

Calcutta, India.

Attention of Mr. H. Kapur.

Dear Sirs,

Steel Cabinets.

Thank you for your inquiry, in reply to which we are sending you herewith a copy of illustrated catalogue of Steel Cabinets. Our model 120 is the nearest to the measurements you have specified though it is 33½" deep instead of the 35" that you need.

We have, however, passed your inquiry to our works and have asked them to report whether this model can be altered to meet your requirements.

We shall write to you again within two weeks.

Yours faithfully,

TAWU TRADING CO., LTD.,

P. T. Chen

P. T. Chen,

Manager,
Export Dept.

PT/ha

Enc. 1 Catalogue.

cc TAIPEI Safe Mfg. Co., Ltd.

P.S. We shall be able to send you our leaflet "Trade Guide" in a few days, which is now in print. *PT*

① Letterhead ② Reference Number ③ Date ④ Inside Address ⑤ Particular Address ⑥ Salutation ⑦ Letter Subject ⑧ Body ⑨ Complimentary Close ⑩ Signature ⑪ Identification Marks ⑫ Enclosure Remarks ⑬ Carbon Copy Notation ⑭ Postscript

【例2】 Block Form, Open Punctuation

Eastern Import Company

1 WASHINGTON AVENUE * PROVIDENCE 5, RHODE ISLAND * STUART 1-0170

Cable Address : Eastimpc
Providence
Nov. 29, 1987[Formo Co., Ltd.
P. O. Box 712
Taipei, Taiwan, R. O. C.

Gentlemen :

A good client of mine has a line of jewelry in which the settings are of such a size as to accomodate the four enclosed stones which he is now using. If I can supply him with mother of pearl in the exact same 4 sizes and shapes we will be able to create some business without investing a lot of money here for making entirely new designs ; therefore, I would like to receive samples and price quotations of the enclosed 4 shapes and sizes in mother of pearl, green snail and saze shell if possible all with slightly domed tops and in a thickness between $1\frac{1}{2}$ and $2\frac{1}{2}$ m/m.

Incidentally, if the exact color of the enclosed samples can be accomplished in glass there will be a market for this special type of turquoise matrix stone which has the black color running through it and is the exact color of the natural mineral deposits of which these stones are an imitation.

We shall hope to hear your good news in the very near future concerning the above.

Very truly yours,

*Albert J. Jacobs*Albert J. Jacobs
Eastern Import Company

AJJ/rj

p. s. We are awaiting your price quotation on linked pearl chain with 10x5 m/m baroque oval pearlized beads. As we said before, the price of this chain should be much lower than the price of the 8 mm round baroque and therefore we will probably have a good market for it.

【例3】 Modified Block Form [Semiblock Form], Close Punctuation



Information

THE WORLD ASSOCIATION OF I. T. INFORMATION OFFICES. GENEVA

TELEPHONE : WELBECK 9010
INLAND CABLES : CENTMATION WESDO LONDON
OVERSEAS CABLES : CENTMATION LONDON

CENTRAL OFFICE,
15. THAYER STREET,
LONDON. W.1,
ENGLAND.

Our Ref. NI-241/1 Your Ref.

Date 22nd January 1987.

I.T. OFFICES IN :

Amsterdam
Athens
Barcelona
Bayrouth
Bombay
Bilbao
Brussels
Buenos Aires
Cairo
Cape Town
Copenhagen
Durban
Frankfurt
Geneva
Hamburg
Helsinki
Istanbul
Johannesburg
Karachi
Lisbon
London
Madrid
Milan
Montreal
New York
Oslo
Paris
Santiago(Chile)
Sao Paulo
Stockholm
Tangiers
Teheran
Tel Aviv
Valencia
Vienna
Wuppertal-Elberfeldt
Zurich

The Managing Director,
Formosa Co., Ltd.,
1, Tongan St. Taipei,
TAIWAN, R. O. C.

Dear Sir,

In the course of our Market Research activities the name of your firm has come to our notice and we now take the opportunity to send you some information on the functions of our organization. From the enclosed memorandum you will see that we are interested in the promotion of international trade relations.

However, it is necessary to have some particulars of new firms before introducing them to our members and, therefore, we shall be pleased if you will kindly complete the enclosed form, on both sides.

Should you have any special requirements we shall be only too pleased to publish such in our international Export/Import list, which is circulated amongst all our members.

The information you give will be regarded as strictly confidential and will be used only as a guide when introducing members of our Association to you.

Your co-operation will be welcomed and appreciated.

Yours faithfully,
I.T. INFORMATION,

E. Frostholt
E. Frostholt,
Acting Manager.

Encl. Memorandum & Questionnaire.

【例4】 Modified Block Form, Open Punctuation

SAN FRANCISCO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

333 PINE STREET

December 22, 1986

Mr. C. K. Yang
 Forseason Co., Ltd.
 P.O. Box No. 389
 Taipei, Taiwan, R. O. C.

Dear Sir :

This will acknowledge and thank you for your letter of November 17, in which you expressed your interest in obtaining trade information or trade connections with firms located in the San Francisco area. We are pleased that you should direct this inquiry to us, and though we wish it were possible to answer you individually, we are using this form letter to assure you of a prompt reply.

As you will note from the enclosed copy of our latest INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN, we have placed an announcement in your behalf among the listed "Trade Tips" featured in this publication. Our Bulletin receives a wide distribution among local firms engaged in world trade, and experience has proven the Trade Tip Service, rendered to you without charge, to be a most effective means of establishing trade connections between local and overseas business houses. Firms wishing to contact you, as a result of the notice, will do so directly.

In addition, we should like to make one or more of the following suggestions as indicated by a check mark below:

1. That you consult the DIRECTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO EXPORTERS AND IMPORTERS, a copy of which has been sent to the _____ in your city. This Directory, compiled and edited by our Department, contains 24 separate lists of firms classified according to the products they handle or the areas they serve, and we are confident you will find it a very comprehensive and useful guide.
2. That you try contacting those firms whose addresses are given on the attached list and which, according to the information given, may be interested in your offers or in supplying your needs.
3. As you seek information about manufacturers throughout the United States, that you refer to the various business directories on file at the nearest American Consular office. THOMAS' REGISTER OF AMERICAN MANUFACTURERS should prove especially helpful.

We sincerely hope that our action in this matter, as well as the above suggested information sources, will be of help to you and that you will feel free to call us again whenever we may be of further assistance to you.

Yours very truly,

Alvin C. Eichholz

Alvin C. Eichholz, Manager
 World Trade Department

ACE:JMJ
 Enclosure

In endeavoring to establish United States connections, or if you desire to supply the United States market with the products of your country, it is important that full information be given, either direct or through the American Consul, regarding your specific requirements. Banking connections and specific United States trade references, if any, should be included.

【例 5】 Extreme Block Form, Open Punctuation

THE STANDARD REGISTER COMPANY

Manufacturer of Record Systems of Control for Business and Industry

DAYTON 1, OHIO

April 20, 1987

Professor Chen-soon CHEN

National Taiwan University

Roosevelt Road, Taipei

Taiwan, R. O. C.

Dear Professor Chen:

Thank you for your gracious letter of March 10. I am glad that you found my article on correspondence improvement of interest, and certainly want to be of as much help as possible to you in your teaching of Business English.

Attached are samples of form letters used by our company and some additional material:

1. Sales letter to prospective customers--mimeographed, no fill-ins
2. Sales letter to prospective customers--automatically typed with manually typed fill-ins
3. First reminder of overdue account sent to customer--printed, typed fill-ins
4. Second reminder of overdue account--printed, typed fill-ins
5. Form used for short handwritten messages within the organization--not used for outside correspondence
6. "Choice of messages" form sent by Order Service Department in home Office to sales representatives in the Field--printed, handwritten fill-ins
7. Example of training material used--dittoed
8. Table of Contents for "Up-to-Standard" Letters (correspondence manual)

If it were possible, I should be happy to send you a copy of our manual, but we don't have even one that we can spare. Since much of the material in the manual applies specifically to our own organization, we had printed only the number actually required for our use at the time. We have now reached the point that we don't have as many copies as we need for our own training program. Should we ever print additional copies for distribution, however, you may be sure that you will receive a copy.

You are welcome, Professor Chen, to use the attached samples in your classroom discussions, but nothing may be reproduced without written permission from The Standard Register Company.

If you have any questions concerning our correspondence practices, or if I may be of help to you in any way, please call on me. It will be a pleasure to give you any information you wish.

Sincerely yours,

Sybil Lee Gilmore

Correspondence Supervisor

SLGilmore/gs

〈註〉參考 P.34 「附件記號」項