

21世纪财经类规划教材

外贸英语函电

刘 莉 主 编
苏振东 刘凤娟 副主编

清华大学出版社

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内 容 简 介

本书内容包括五个方面：外贸函电的写作原则；商务信函的结构；建立商务关系；询盘及报价、还盘、订货、付款、信用证、包装、运输、保险、索赔与理赔、代理；常用外贸英语函电缩写。

本书可作为高等院校国际贸易、金融学等专业的教学用书，也可作为外贸从业人员的工作参考用书。

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前 言

随着中国加入世界贸易组织,国际化合作与交流日益频繁,对国际商务人才的需求也与日俱增,因此,提高学生撰写国际商务信函的能力势在必行。

一方面,现有教材只关注外贸函电书信的准确、完整、具体的问题,随着时代的发展,外贸函电书信还要注重清晰、礼貌、简洁、体谅等更多的问题。从教学实践出发,本书引入最新的商务信件,并给予英汉详尽的解释,通过总结国际贸易实际运作环节的基础知识,循序渐进地铺垫出专业知识的英语语言环境。另一方面,针对学生容易出错的地方着重进行点评,以提高教学效率。此外,每一章节,还附加了常用的单词、短语和句子,便于学生记忆和选择。

本书特色:①体现了时代发展的特征,重视外贸函电的规范性、实用性和针对性;②重视学生的分析和解决问题能力的培养,理论结合实践,强调启发性思维;③侧重于语言的运用技巧;④体现外贸函电教学的系统性、逻辑性等特征。

通过本课程的学习,学生能够:①了解外贸函电的写作原则,形成对商务交易流程的基本认识,从而建立对外贸函电基本知识框架的把握;②掌握外贸函电的主要写作方式与方法,包括各种策略与技巧,为在国际贸易中进行实际操作提供知识准备;③结合课后练习,更重视理论联系实践,进一步培养和提高学生提出问题、分析问题和解决问题的能力。

本书可作为各高校金融学和国际贸易专业的相关课程教材,以大学本科教学为主,还包括研究生和高职生。

编写分工:刘莉负责第1章~第6章、第10章~第11章及全书统稿,刘凤娟负责第7章~第9章,苏振东负责第12章~第13章。

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2012年3月

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Chapter 1 Principles of Business Letter Writing

外贸函电的写作原则



Lead-in

As 2011 marks the 10th anniversary of China's entry to the World Trade Organization (WTO), the opening of the Chinese market has boosted the economic development of China. The accession to the WTO has also accelerated China's integration into the world economy and the global trading system. With the expanding of international trade, business communication gains more and more attention. Business letter is an indispensable part of the business communication.

2011年是中国加入世贸组织的十周年,中国市场的开放促进了中国的经济发展。加入世贸组织,也同时加速了中国融入世界经济和全球贸易体系的步伐。随着国际贸易活动日趋频繁,商务交流得到越来越多的重视。外贸书信是商务沟通中不可或缺的一部分。

Learning Objectives

In this chapter, you will be able to:

Understand principles of business letters.

Know the basic steps of international trade.

通过本章节，

· 学到商务书信写作原则。

了解与商业客户进行国际贸易的基本步骤。

Writing for a business audience is usually quite different from writing in the humanities, social sciences, or other academic disciplines. Business writing strives to be crisp and succinct rather than evocative or creative; it stresses specificity and accuracy. This distinction does not make business writing superior or inferior to other styles. Rather, it reflects the unique purpose and considerations involved when writing in a business context.

商务书信写作与人文、社会科学类的写作或者其他学术论文写作不同。商务写作要做到简洁明了，而不是随意发挥，它强调具体、准确。这个特点并非使得商务写作优于或者差于其他写作方式，相反，它反映的是商务环境下写作的独特背景和目的。

When you write a business document, you must assume that your audience has limited time to read it and is likely to skim. Your readers have an interest in what you say insofar as it affects their working world. They want to know the “bottom line”: the point you are making about a situation or problem and how they should respond.

当你在进行商务写作时，你要假定你的读者读信的时间有限，很可能是在几分钟之内快速浏览信的内容。出于工作的原因，你的读者对于你的书信内容很有兴趣。他们想知道你的“底线”：你对于某个状况的观点，或者对于某个问题的态度，他们应该如何给你答复。

Business writing varies from the conversational style often found in email messages to the more formal, legalistic style found in contracts. A style between these two extremes is appropriate for the majority of memos, emails, and letters. Writing that is too formal can alienate readers, and an attempt to be overly casual may come across as insincere or unprofessional. In business writing, as in all writing, you must know your audience.

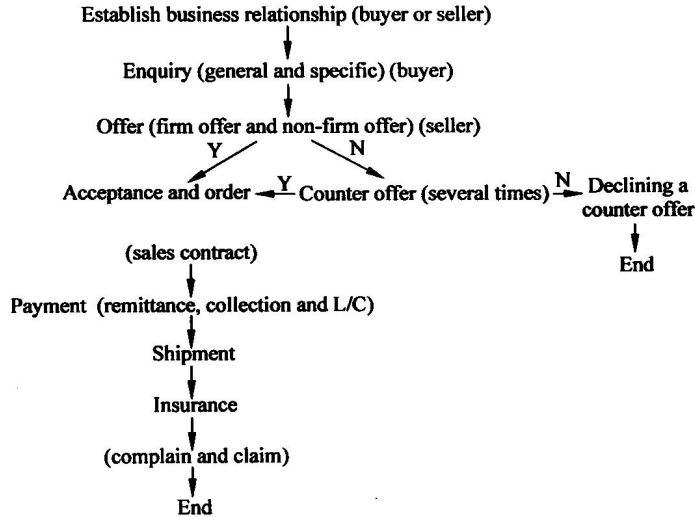
商务写作风格迥异，从电子邮件中的口头式风格，到合同中法律条文式的正式风格。在这两者之间的风格适合多数的备忘录、电子邮件和信件。写作太过正式，会使读者产生距离感，如果过于随意，又可能给人以不真诚和不专业的感觉。与其他写作一样，在商务写作中，你一定要了解你的读者。

In most cases, the business letter will be the first impression that you make on someone. Though business writing has become less formal over time, you should still take great care

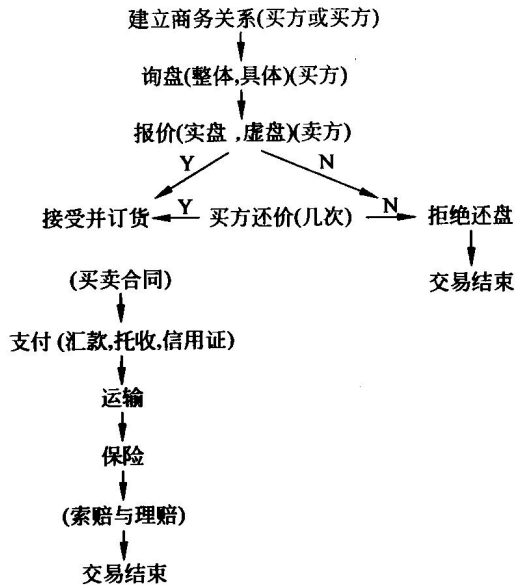
that your letter's content is clear and that you have proofread it carefully.

在多数情况下,商务信件是你给别人留下的第一印象。尽管现在,商务信件不那么正式了,你仍然要确保信件的内容清晰,没有错误。

Before we learn about the principles of business letters, we should know the process of business communication with the following steps:



在我们介绍商务书信的原则之前,首先要先了解一下商务交易的如下步骤:



Business writing principles include seven “C”: Clarity, Conciseness, Correctness, Concreteness, Consideration, Courtesy, Completeness.

商务写作原则包括七个“C”: 清楚、简洁、准确、具体、体谅、礼貌、完整。

1. Clarity (清楚原则)

Good business letter should be free from any confusion or ambiguity. It should insure clarity of thoughts with no omission of words, no faulty punctuation and no disorderly arrangement of facts. There has to be affixation of full stops and commas at right places so that there is no change in the sense or subject of the matter. Besides this, there has to be proper specification of numbers and figures to maintain the authenticity of the matter. The faulty punctuations or faulty words may prove disaster or failure for the business relations. The writer must try to express his meaning clearly so that the reader will understand it well. To achieve this, he should try to:

好的商务信件避免使用一些含混不清或模棱两可的词汇。要确保条理清晰,没有省略的文字,没有错误的标点和杂乱无序的事实。句号和逗号要在准确的位置,否则会影响到主题的含义。除此以外,数字要准确真实,错误的标点或文字会破坏或阻碍商务关系的发展。写信者必须头脑清楚、表达准确,这样读者才能完全了解写信者要表达的意思,不会产生误解。这就要求要做到如下几点:

1) Avoid using the words which have different understanding or unclear meaning. 避免使用有歧义或者意思含混不清的词汇。

e. g. As to the steamers sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco, we have (bimonthly) direct services.

The word “bimonthly” has two meanings: twice a month, or once two months. The reader will feel puzzled about the meaning.

单词“bimonthly”有两层含义: 一个月两次,或者两个月一次。读者会产生误解。

(Rewriting):

a. We have two direct sailings every month from Hong Kong to San Francisco.

b. We have semimonthly direct sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco.

c. We have a direct sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco every two months.

2) Pay attention to the position of the modifiers. 注意修饰语的位置。

e. g. a. We shall be able to supply 10 cases of the item (only).

b. We shall be able to supply 10 cases (only) of the item.

The modifier “only” in the above sentences modified two different words, so the two sentences have different meanings. 修饰语“only”在上面的句子中修饰两个不同的词,因此这两个句子含义不同。

3) Pay attention to the sentence structure. 注意句子结构。

e. g. a. We sent you 5 samples yesterday of the goods which you requested in your letter of May 25 by air.

b. We sent you, by air, 5 samples of the goods which you requested in your letter of May 25 yesterday.

Commercial letters should be clear and tidy, easy to understand the content. So a writer should paragraph a letter carefully and properly. One paragraph for each point is a good general rule.

商务信件要清晰易懂。因此,作者要认真地斟酌信中的段落。一般来说,一个段落写一个观点比较好。

2. Conciseness (简洁原则)

That is using concise sentences and fewest words, without losing completeness and courtesy, to explain the meaning of a letter clearly. The followings are the methods of making a letter concise:

简洁是指用最少的语言清楚地表达内容,并且不影响信函的礼貌性和完整性。如下是具体的方法:

1) Avoid using wordy expressions. 避免冗长的表达。

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 repetitions. 避免使用不必要的重复。

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

(Rewriting)

Please ship us by the end of November.

3) Using short sentences, simple words and clear explanations. 使用短句、简单词语和清晰的表达。

(1) Use a word to replace a phrase. 用单词代替短语。

用 enclosed 代替 enclosed herewith

用 now 代替 at this time

用 because 代替 due to the fact that

用 a draft for \$ 1,000 代替 a draft in the amount of \$ 1,000

(2) Use a phrase to replace a sentence. 用短语代替句子。

Please don't hesitate to call upon us.

Please visit us.

Please see that an enquiry is conducted to determine the reason.

Please find out the reason.

(3) Use words to replace clauses. 用词语代替从句。

We require a full-automatic washing machine which is of the new type.

We require a new-type full-automatic washing machine.

4) Avoid padded expressions. 避免过于啰唆的表达。

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

(For your information) we enclose a catalogue.

(Please be advised that) we have received your invoice.

3. Correctness (准确原则)

Business letters must be factual information, for they involve the right, the duties and the interest of both sides, often as the base of all kinds of documents. Correctness is the most critical principle of business letter writing. It refers not only to correct usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling, but also to standard language, proper statement and information, accurate figures as well as the correct understanding of commercial jargons. Therefore, we should not understate nor overstate as understatement might lead to less confidence and hold up the trade development while overstatement would throw you in an awkward position. We need to check the relevant information such as the name and the address of the recipient, the delivery time and place, the quality, color, size, overall price and packing of the goods.

商务英语的信函必须以事实为依据,与买卖双方的权利、义务、利害关系等息息相关,是制作各种商业单据的依据。准确无误是商业英语信函写作中重要的原则。准确原则不仅仅指单词拼写、标点符号无误,语法使用、结构格式正确,还应确保信函所涉及的语言、信息、数字、商业用语准确无误。因此,我们既不能轻描淡写,也不能夸大其词,因为那都会使对方失去对你的信任,阻碍贸易的进行,或者使你处于尴尬的境地。在商业英语信函写作中我们应反复审核相关信息,如:收信人的姓名和地址;交货时间和地点,货物品质、颜色、尺码、总价和包装。

1) Grammar mistakes often occur in business writing. 外贸函电中常常出现语法错误。

(1) with pronouns. 代词。

Our competitors' prices is 2%~3% lower than us (ours).

(2) with verbs. 动词。

It is one of the machines that was (were) delivered last week.

(3) With conjunctions. 连词。

This fridge not only is attractive (is attractive not only) in proper price, but also in good quality.

(4) with subjects. 主语。

While studying the report, the telephone rang.

(Rewriting)

While I was studying the report, the telephone rang.

Depositing money with us, our bank can pay you high dividends.

(Rewriting)

Depositing money with us, you earn high dividends.

2) Avoid using overstatements. 避免夸大其词。

It is the lowest price available to you.

(Rewriting)

It is the lowest price that we can offer you now.

We are well-established exporters of all kinds of goods made in Sweden.

(Rewriting)

We are well-established exporters of Swedish sundry goods, such as toys, buttons and stationary.

3) Accurate numbers. 数字要精确。

5% up to 10% both inclusive

up to \$ 40 inclusive

on or after July 10

from the 1st to 15th of March both inclusive

for five days exclusive of the day of despatch.

for 15 days exclusive of Sundays

Stg. \$ 445.00 (Four Hundred and Forty-five pounds Sterling only)

£ 15.01 (Fifteen Pounds and One penny)

US \$ 450.00 (US Dollars Four hundred and Fifty only) or (Four Hundred and Fifty Dollars U.S. Currency) or (Four Hundred Fifty United States Dollars)

5ft. 10in (five feet ten inches)

1'5" × 2' × 31/2" (one foot five inches wide, two feet long, and three inches and a half thick (high))

1/4" pipe (pipe measuring 1/4 inch)

120 sq. ft. (120 square feet)

40c. ft. (40 cubic feet)

28" × 30yds. (28 inches in width, 30 yards in length)

4) Capital letters. 大写字母。

Business correspondence has its special regulations for capital letter writing besides the ordinary rules.

除了遵守一般的通用规则外,商务信函对于大写字母还有特别的要求。

(1) North, South, East, West

When they are used for districts or areas but not for orientations:

当它们表示区域而不是表示方向的时候,首字母要大写:

South-West Africa

North America

West Europe

(2) The name and the brand of a commodity。商品的名字和品牌,首字母要大写。

“Great Wall” Electric Fan

“Three-Star” Calf Shoes

Chinese Cotton Piece Goods

(3) The name of documents。文件的名字,首字母要大写。

Price List

Letter of Credit

Catalog E-35

Order No. 123

(4) The name of the transportation tools。交通工具的名字,首字母要大写。

the S.S. “Merry Captain”

the S.S. “Lucky Prince”

the m. v. “East Wind”

the m. v. “Silver River”

4. Concreteness (具体原则)

Concreteness means being specific, definite, and vivid rather than vague and general. Concreteness is always stressed, especially for letters calling for a specific reply, such as trade terms, shipment, packaging, specifications and characters of goods, figures and dates.

The following guidelines can help us write concretely: use specific facts and

figures; prefer active voice to passive voice; pay attention to word order, putting modifiers in right place; choose vivid, image-building words.

具体原则指确定、翔实具体、丰富生动,不能有半点模糊和宽泛。人们总是强调具体原则,尤其是写信时需要对方给予具体的回应,诸如贸易条款、运输、包装、货物规格与特点,数字与日期。

如下方法可以帮助我们写作时遵循具体原则:使用具体的事实和数字;用主动语态而不是被动语态;注意词语的顺序,把修饰语放在恰当的位置;选用生动的、有画面感的词语。

Compare:

ST858L 5-Band Stereo Radio Cassette Recorder is of full functions.

(Rewriting)

ST858L 5-Band Stereo Radio Cassette Recorder can deliver superb FM/MW/LW/SW1/SW2/FM Stereo band reception. Full auto-stop and automatic quick program search (AQPS system).

We have drawn on you as usual under your L/C.

(Rewriting)

We have drawn on you our sight draft No. 845 for the Invoice amount, US \$ 560.00, under your L/C No. 246 of the Bank of China.

Give specific time with date, month, year and even offer hour, minute if necessary in business letters, but avoid general and vague expressions such as soon, at an early date, good, nearly and etc.

在商务信函写作中要注意,如果有必要的话,写上具体的时间、日期和年月,如果需要的话,还要写上几点几分钟。避免类似 soon, at an early date, good, nearly 等笼统的、含混不清的表达法。

I will send the samples to you soon.

(Rewriting)

I will send the samples to you in two weeks.

I will send the samples to you next Monday.

5. Courtesy (礼貌原则)

To establish and maintain a good trade relationship, the business letter should follow the principle of courtesy. Courtesy is not merely politeness. It stems from a sincere attitude. True courtesy needs to use tactful tone and respectful expressions to show the honest attitude, thoughtful appreciation, sincere politeness, considerate understanding and heartfelt respect.

Avoid courtesy blunders in your letters. Discrepancy often occurs in business, but it should be handled and settled with diplomacy and tact without ill will on either side. Never show your anger in a business letter. Never use irritating, offensive and belittling statements. To answer letters promptly is also a matter of courtesy.

为了建立和保持一个友好的贸易关系,商务英语信函往来一般要注意礼貌原则,以礼待人。礼貌原则不仅仅体现在使用礼貌词汇上面,而且要在字里行间体现出真诚的态度。语言表达要客气有分寸,多用友好的语气来巧妙地表达诚恳的感谢、真诚的礼貌、体贴的理解和由衷的尊重。

避免不当的表达。商务交往中难免会产生分歧,但是可以在不伤害任何一方的前提下,运用策略和巧妙辞令处理并妥善解决。应避免在商务信件中表现出愤怒,避免使用惹人生气的、冒犯的或者贬低他人的言辞。快速回信也是一种礼貌。

Compare:

(Polite)

We have received with many thanks your letter of Oct. 7, and we take the pleasure of sending you our latest catalogue. We wish to draw your attention to a special offer which we have made in it.

(Courteous)

You will be particularly interested in a special offer on page 5 of the latest catalogue enclosed, which you requested in your letter of Oct. 7.

6. Consideration (体谅原则)

Consideration emphasizes (You-attitude) rather than (We-attitude). When writing a letter, keep the reader's request, needs, desires, as well as his feelings in mind. Plan the best way to present the message for the reader to receive.

体谅是指以对方利益为出发点(而不是以自己利益为出发点)。写信的时候,要把读者的要求、需求、想法和感受记在心上。找出最好的方法来有效传递信息。

The following points are necessary for writing a letter to embody consideration:
下面的方法有助于体现体谅原则:

1) You-attitude 第二人称

Compare:

We-attitude 第一人称

We allow 2 percent discount for cash payment.

We won't be able to send you the brochure this month.

You-attitude 第二人称

You earn 2 percent discount when you pay cash.

You will receive the brochure next month.

2) Focus on the positive approach 强调积极的、正面的表达

Compare:

(Positive)

We feel sure that you will be entirely satisfied.

(Negative)

We do not believe you will have cause for dissatisfaction.

(Positive)

Perhaps next time we can send you what you require.

(Negative)

We regret our inability to serve you at this time.

7. Completeness (完整原则)

A business letter should include all the necessary information. It is essential to check the message carefully before it is sent out. Whether a letter is complete, we advise you to use five "W" to check: Who, What, Where, When, Why (including How).

一封商务书信应该包含所有的必要信息。在信发出以前,要仔细检查以后再寄出。一封信写得是否完整,建议用五个“W”来检验: Who, What, Where, When, Why(包括 How)。

For example, in the letter of ordering, it must be clearly stated: what you want, when you need the goods, to whom and where the goods to be sent, how payment will be made. If you give a negative answer to the partner's request, you should give reasons and explain why.

例如在订货的信中,必须明确说明:需要什么商品,何时需要,货物发到何地何人收,如何付款。如对对方的要求做出否定的答复时,应说明理由并解释为什么。

