



高级商务英语写作

Advanced Business English Writing

主编 黄震华



中央广播电视大学出版社

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前言

随着中外商贸活动日益频繁,以英语作为载体的商务沟通,在商务活动中发挥着日益重要的作用。为适应国际商务的发展对人才素质的要求,满足读者提升商务沟通能力和就业能力的需求,我们编写了《高级商务英语写作》教材。

《高级商务英语写作》遵从交际原则,注重培养学生商务英语实际运用能力。本教材内容丰富,实用性强,借鉴国内外商务沟通的先进研究成果,突出商务英语写作特点,重点教授写作范式、专业术语和句型、写作原则和技巧。

本教材针对国家开放大学商务英语专业本科段的学生编写,并可作为成人院校和普通高校复合型英语专业学生的写作教材,亦可供从事外贸和商务工作的读者学习使用。考虑到开放大学毕业生未来的实际工作需要,本教材的内容重点是企业用于对外联系的英文信函写作,企业内部使用的英文备忘录和电子邮件等内容不作为重点。

编写指导思想

贯穿本教材的编写指导思想有两条:一是通过系统的商务英语写作训练,提升学生的书面交际能力;二是通过英语写作技能训练和商务沟通能力训练的有机结合,培养学生分析与判断、思考与创新的能力。

基本结构

本教材设有六个写作技能训练单元、六个复习与自测单元。根据实际商务活动需要,写作技能训练单元分为不同的主题,总体包括以下五个环节。

写前准备:围绕主题,设计了Talking(口头讨论),Brainstorming(头脑风暴)和Free Writing(自由写作)三大类互动。口头讨论旨在导入主题,头脑风暴旨在准备写作用语,自由写作目的在于为后续写作进行语言和信息的铺垫。

技能讲解:围绕主题,重点讲授商务背景和写作知识、文件结构,进行范文分析。通过商务背景和写作知识的学习,帮助学生理解写作的结构特点和重要意义,并掌握不同主题的写作技巧,培养学生写出内容有效、用语规范的商务文件。

自主学习:结合主题,精心编写了多个商务范文。范文为学生的商务写作提供商务理念、结构和用语的示范,以促进学生对商务写作的理解和掌握,培养学生自主写作商务行文的能力。

写作练习：设计了词语训练、理解训练、翻译训练等多种形式的练习，旨在加深学生对商务英语用语的理解与掌握，提高学生对写作技能的运用能力。写作练习部分的最后设置了与主题有关的写作题，使学生可以综合运用所学知识。

实用词语：精编了与单元主题相关的实用词汇、短语和句子，为学生写作提供语言资料，利于学生对商务英语语言知识的学习。

教材特色

实用性、系统性：根据毕业生职业发展过程，即根据学生求职应聘、熟悉公司、日常办公、商务谈判到执行外贸合同的职业进程，设计章节顺序和内容。在第一章介绍商务英语写作的特点后，第二章介绍求职应聘（个人简历、求职信）、第三章介绍企业对外宣传（公司介绍、产品描述、销售函）、第四章介绍商务社交（邀请函、感谢信、恭贺信）、第五章介绍业务磋商（询盘与回复、发盘与还盘、订单与合同）、第六章介绍外贸业务中执行合同所涉及的各个环节（包装、运输与保险、支付与信用证修订、投诉与索赔）的信函写作。各章节内容有较强的岗位适应性特点，符合实际工作需要。

针对性、操作性：本教材编写充分考虑了中国成人英语学习的特点和实际需要。本教材将学习目标提示、学习过程介绍、学习方法指导、学习资料配备贯穿于学习活动中，强化学生自主学习能力的培养。每个单元中的各个主题后设置了自主学习和写作练习环节。此外，每个单元后，设置了复习和自测题。教材附有练习题参考答案，方便学生测评。

同时，每单元教学内容的安排由浅入深。采用学生首先思考，然后自由练习，进而学习写作策略，学习范文，综合练习，最终完成写作的模式。这种模式符合学生的学习规律，利于促进学生的学习效果。

时代性、先进性：本教材整体设计与现实国际商务实际需要紧密结合，内容丰富，基本涵盖了现阶段国际商务环境下的所有最为实用的商务英语写文体。本教材在编写过程中，注重借鉴国内外商务英语写作的成功经验与教学实践成果。同时，注意结合剑桥商务英语考试中写作的类型来设置教材内容，并与国内外先进的写作教学理念与模式接轨，为培养学生更高水平的商务英语写作能力打下基础。

本教材由对外经济贸易大学教授黄震华担任主编，由国家开放大学副教授张宇光担任课程组组长，参与编写的还有大连海洋大学副教授安然、国家开放大学副教授张宇光、大连海洋大学讲师刘士新、辽宁对外经贸学院讲师郭亚卿。

本教材的审定专家有沈月山（对外经济贸易大学教授）、徐俊贤（对外经济贸易大学教授）、刘永权（北京开放大学副教授）。国家开放大学外语学院领导刘占荣和石运志以及本教材策划编辑许岚也对本教材的编写提出了宝贵建议和意见。教材编写组在此对各方的支持与帮助一并表示衷心的感谢。

由于时间紧张，加之作者水平有限，本教材难免存在疏漏之处，恳请专家、同行及本教材使用者不吝指正，以便修订完善。

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2013年10月

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Chapter One

Introduction to Business Writing

Module 1 An Overview of Business Writing

Module 2 Construction of Effective Sentences and Paragraphs

Module 3 Structure of Business Writing



Communication is one of the most underdeveloped skills in the arsenal of young professionals entering business today.

If you want to run the show someday and run it well, you had better learn to think, write and speak, in that order, clearly, forcefully, concisely and to the point.

Communication is a skill that will quickly separate the winners from the losers up the management ladder.

—— Mr. Ed Artzt Former P&G President

如今，沟通是进入商务领域的年轻专业人员的最薄弱的技能之一。

如果你想有一天操纵局势，并掌控得力，你最好学习用一种逻辑性强、清楚、有力、简洁和切题的方式思考、写作和讲话。

沟通是在管理阶层的阶梯上，能够迅速将成功者与失败者区分开来的技能。

——宝洁公司前董事长 埃德·阿兹特



Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the chapter, students should be able to:
Acquire a comprehensive understanding of business writing
Construct effective sentences and paragraphs
Write business letters of standard structures and formats

Learning Process

Read the Overview of Business Writing
Study the seven criteria of effective business writing
Learn to construct effective sentences and paragraphs
Study the structures and formats of business writing

Connecting to the Topic

Discuss the following questions in small groups.

1. What are the means of business communication?
2. What are the differences between personal communication and business communication?
3. What should people be conscious of when they communicate with international audience and reduce the chances of misunderstanding?

Preparing to Write

1. Talking about Business Writing

In small groups, answer the following questions.

- 1. On what occasions will business writing be used?
- 2. What kind of business writing is successful?
- 3. What does the writing process consist of?



People write to invite business partners to attend special activities.



Business negotiation needs a lot of paperwork.



Foreign trade correspondence is frequently exchanged during the execution of orders.

2. Brainstorming about Business Writing

In small groups, discuss in what circumstances people need to write for business. Complete the chart to illustrate them.

| Circumstances | Types of Writing |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Job Hunting | |
| Social Communication | |
| Foreign Trade Negotiation | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

3. Free Writing about a Business Letter

Think of the writing process of a business letter. Consider the parts of a letter and their placement.

Module 1 An Overview of Business Writing

Part 1 Introduction

Every business produces paperwork. Business writing is a vital factor in making the world of business run efficiently, effectively and productively. No modern businesses could exist for long without letters and other forms of written communication.

Business communication includes external communication and internal communication. In view of the needs of our prospective students, this book focuses on external communication, i.e., communication between enterprises, rather than that within one company. Therefore, certain modes that are mainly used in internal communication, e.g., memo and e-mail, are not included.

Business writing serves to pass on information, to express ideas, to exchange feelings and to deal with business. A business needs to communicate with its employees, clients, trading partners and funding bodies in order to operate the business and to promote products and services.

Successful Business Communication can realize two goals, i.e., the recipient interprets the message as the sender intends; it achieves the sender's purposes. "Business writing ... is utilitarian, aiming to serve any one of many purposes." Here are just a few purposes of business writing:

- ◎ To explain or justify actions already taken, e.g., "Given that situation, we have determined that the best course of action is to reject all current bids and to seek others."
- ◎ To convey information, as in a research report or the promulgation of a new company policy, e.g., "Management wants all employees to know that the old policy will stop as soon as we have evidence of improved morale."
- ◎ To influence the reader to take some action, e.g., "I hope that you will find that our new, Webbased cash management services can reduce your capital requirements and save you money."
- ◎ To deliver good or bad news, e.g., "Unfortunately, the engine fire you reported occurred one day after the expiration of the warranty period."
- ◎ To direct action, e.g., "Your team should complete and deliver the product specifications by May 1." (Harvard Business Essentials: Business Communication, Harvard Business School Press, 2003)

At every stage, fluent, error-free writing can give a big advantage. Good writing will be used in different contexts to develop businessmen or to expand the business. Therefore, it is necessary for people who engage in foreign affairs to have a good command of the linguistic features and writing techniques in practical English writing.

Part 2 Criteria for Effective Business Writing

Effective writing for business must comply with seven criteria, to be considerate, clear, concise, concrete, correct, complete and courteous (seven Cs). It should realize three functions: to inform; to influence; to entertain.

Consideration

The interrelationship between the sender and the recipient profoundly affects communicative effectiveness. Consideration means that the writer prepares the writing with the readers in mind. You should take the following into consideration:

- Identify the recipients' cultural, religious and ethnic background.
- Determine the size and composition of the recipients.
- Analyze the recipients' problem and circumstance.
- Determine the recipients' level of understanding.
- Analyze the recipients' needs (informational, motivational, emotional, practical needs).
- Analyze the recipients' possible reaction.

To indicate you are considerate, you can use the following special skills that will make the communication more effective:

Focus on "You" Instead of "I" or "We"

Your readers are usually more concerned about themselves than about you. They are more interested in your writing when they see the pronoun "you" rather than "I" or "we". "You" viewpoint is a technique for building goodwill in letters. It involves being friendly and treating people in the way that they like to be treated.

"I" OR "WE" ORIENTED

I am happy to tell you...

We are pleased to have your new account.

We make Willett razor in three weights—light, medium and heavy.

We have shipped the two dozen Crown desk sets you ordered.

We require that you sign the sales slip before we will charge to your account.

"YOU" VIEWPOINT

You will be happy to know...

Your new charge account is now open for your convenience.

Willett makes razors for you in three weights—light, medium and heavy.

Your two dozen desk sets should reach you with this letter.

For your protection, you are charged only after you have signed the sales slip.

Make Your Writing Interesting and Beneficial to Your Readers

Whenever possible, show your readers what benefits they will get from your writing. They will be more likely to respond favorably and do according to your suggestions if they see that the benefits are worth the effort and cost, for example:

- We have enclosed brochures of our new products. Since we have served you for such a long time, we can offer you prices that compare favorably with the prices on your previous contract. We are confident that both our new and standard products can meet your needs in every way. We hope to hear from you soon.

Emphasize the Positive and Pleasant Facts

To emphasize the positive means stressing what can be done instead of what cannot be done and focusing on ideas your readers can view favorably. By making clear what you can or will do, you often indirectly make clear what you cannot do without using a single negative word, for example:

- We allow 2 percent discount for cash payment. We will not be able to send you the brochure this month. (Bad)
- You earn 2% discount when you pay cash. We will send you the brochure next month. (Better)

Clarity

Clarity means your purpose and the words are clear to your readers so that the recipients can

interpret your words with the same meaning you have in mind. But it is difficult for you to accomplish the goal because individual experiences are never identical and each person's mind is a unique filter.

Here are some suggestions to help make your messages clear:

Choose Proper, Short and Familiar Words

Choose proper words to make the messages easy to understand, e.g.:

- As to the steamers sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco, we have bimonthly direct services. (Bad)
- We have two direct sailings every month from Hong Kong to San Francisco. (Better)
- We have semimonthly direct sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco. (Better)
- We have a direct sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco. (Better)

Choose short and familiar words to make the messages easy to understand, e.g.: better say "after", "use", "show" instead of "subsequently", "utilize" and "disclose".

Make Idea Clear

Put one idea in a sentence, put one topic in a paragraph, and put one subject in a letter.

Use Short Sentences

Short sentences lead to clear meaning and easy understanding. The average sentence length is about 17-20 words. You can use sentences containing 30-40 words. If there are more than 40 or 50 words in a sentence, you can consider rewriting it into more than one sentence.

Have Paragraphs of Suitable Length

In business writing, it is suitable for paragraphs to contain 7-8 lines each. If a paragraph is too long, it may make the main idea unclear and lead to a loose structure. If a paragraph is too short, your reader may be impressed that your topic is not adequately supported.

Conciseness

Conciseness means to write the fewest possible words without sacrificing completeness and courtesy. A concise message saves time and expense for both sender and recipient. Conciseness contributes to emphasis. By eliminating unnecessary words, you help make important ideas stand out. To achieve conciseness, try to observe the following suggestions:

Shorten or Remove Redundant Words or Expressions

As few words as possible should be used to give complete and clear meanings. If possible, a word should be used instead of a phrase, a phrase instead of a clause, a clause instead of a sentence and a sentence instead of a paragraph. The following are ways to achieve conciseness:



Avoid Cluttering Phrases:

| Cluttering phrases | Shorter substitutions |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| At the present time | Now |
| For the purpose of | For |
| For the reason that | Since, because |
| In the near future | Soon |
| In view of the fact that | Since, because |
| Prior to the start | Before |
| A draft in the amount of \$ 1,000 | A draft for \$ 1,000 |

Eliminate Redundant Words:

| With Redundant Words |
|---|
| There are five rules that should be observed. |
| In the period between June and August they found the error. |
| His performance was good enough to enable him to qualify for the promotion. |
| It came at a time when we were busy. |
| Leather depreciates in value slowly. |
| We will ship these shoes at a later date. |
| As a matter of interest, I am interested in learning your plan. |
| Eliminate Redundant Words |
| Five rules should be observed. |
| Between June and August they found the error. |
| His performance was good enough to qualify for the promotion. |
| It came when we were busy. |
| Leather depreciates slowly. |
| We will ship these shoes later. |
| I am interested in learning your plan. |

However, the process of condensing should not be carried so far that the message becomes general and loses its original meaning.

Include Only Relevant Facts

The effective concise message should omit not only unnecessary wordy expressions but also irrelevant materials. To make sure you include only relevant facts, you should, first, stick to the purpose of your writing; second, omit information obviously known to your reader; third, avoid unnecessary background materials or explanations, excessive adjectives, pompous words, and gushy politeness.

Avoid Unnecessary Repetition

Sometimes repetition is necessary for emphasis. But if the same thing is said several times without reason, the message becomes boring. The following are three ways to prevent unnecessary repetition: First, use a shorter name after you have mentioned the long one once. For example, use "China Telecom" to indicate "China Telecommunications Company" when the latter has been mentioned before. Second, use pronouns or acronyms rather than repeating long names. For example, instead of using "First Automobile Works" again and again, use "it" or "FAW". Third, get rid of all needless repetition of phrases and sentences.

Concreteness

The writing should be specific, definite and vivid rather than vague, general and abstract.

| Abstract | Concrete |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| A significant loss | A 53 percent loss |
| In the near future | By Thursday noon |
| Light in weight | Feather light |
| The majority | 70 percent |

Correctness

Business writing should be correct in grammar, punctuation, spelling, information, figures, etc.

| Wrong Sentences |
|---|
| My market research report took a long time to prepare. And turned out badly. (Fragment) |
| Profits were down in 1998, the Board blamed the recession. (Comma splice) |
| Employees want to keep their jobs they will work hard for promotions. (Run-on sentence) |
| Correct Sentences |
| My research report in business communication took a long time to prepare and then turned out badly. |
| Profits were down in 1998. The Board blamed the recession. |
| Employees want to keep their jobs. They will work hard for promotions. |

Completeness

Your business writing is complete when it contains all the necessary information and data the reader needs. An incomplete message may result in increased communication costs, loss of goodwill, sales, and valued customers, cost of returning goods, and wasted time.



© Calita Kabir

Keeping the following guidelines in mind will help you achieve completeness:

Make All Points Detailed

Evidence must be precisely stated. The significance of the facts in relation to the problem must be shown. The treatment of each section of the article must be complete or the reader may misunderstand that particular section. The analysis is the basis for the conclusions, and the conclusions are the basis for the recommendations.

Answer All Questions Asked

If you need to reply to an inquiry containing one or more questions, answer all questions clearly stated and implied. If you have no information on a particular question, you must say so clearly, instead of omitting an answer. If you have unfavorable information in answering one or more questions, handle your reply tactfully.

Courtesy

Business writing should be polite, sincere, tactful, thoughtful and appreciative.

Single Out Your Reader

Letters that appear to be written for one reader should make the reader feel important and appreciated. To single out your reader in a letter, you should write for his particular situation, e.g.:

- We look forward to hearing from you. (Not specific)
- We look forward to the possibility of sending our executives to you in the years ahead. (Better)

Use the Reader's Names

Using the reader's names makes him or her feel important, e.g.:

- Mrs. Wilson, you haven't used your charge account in the last six months, and we are getting concerned about you. Will you do us a favor? Write and tell us what happened or, better still, come in and let us serve you again.

Avoid Anger (Sarcasm, Insults, and Exclamations)

You cannot use anger words in your business letter, e.g.:

- We cannot understand your negligence.
- We will not tolerate this condition.
- Your careless attitude has caused us a loss in sales.
- We have had it!

Response in Time

To response in time shows the courtesy, e.g.:

- We have received with many thanks your letter of May 20, and we take the pleasure of sending you our latest catalog. We wish to draw your attention to a special offer which we have made in it.
- You will be particularly interested in a special offer on page 5 of the latest catalog enclosed, which you requested in your letter of May 20.