A WRITING COURSE FOR BUSINESS ENGLISH

商务英语写作教程

王晓英 杨靖 编著

东南大学出版社

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内 容 提 要

本教程将各类商务文本的写作训练与商务英语的语言练习结合起来，针对商务活动的特殊性，将英语放在特殊的商务环境中，对熟悉基础英语的人员进行商务英语语言的再强化。本教程每一单元分语言复习、商务写作和自测练习，将关键语言点和商务文本的介绍和写作训练加以归纳、提高，使读者既能很好地掌握基本语言点，又能熟悉各类商务文本的体例和规范要求，同时辅以适量练习，较好地掌握各类商务文本的写作技能。

本教程适合各类学校、英语专业、经贸专业、经贸英语专业的学生使用，也可供从事涉外经贸工作的人员及具有相当水平的自学者使用。

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再版前言

进入21世纪，科技发展迅猛，经济高速增长，我们正经历前所未有的变革。从传真机到移动电话，从语言信箱到电子邮件，人们的交流手段也越来越迅捷、便利且形式多样，但是所谓的"信息高速公路"并没有取代最基本的交流手段，人们仍然需要用清晰易懂的语言文字来传达信息，表达思想和交流感情。尤其在商务活动中，是否具有良好的商务写作能力仍然被视为从事商务活动人士的重要素质，也是商务活动能否成功的关键因素。一封好的商业书信可能会帮你赢得客户，反之则可能会失掉一批客户。

商务英语写作的重要性对从事涉外经济贸易活动的人来说更是不待言说。随着经济一体化进程的加速，英语已经成为通用的国际性语言之一。中国人要在国际经济舞台上发挥越来越重要的作用和影响，掌握英语是最基本的要求之一；而掌握商务英语，具备良好的商务英语写作能力则是对从事经贸，尤其是国际经贸人员的具体要求。《商务英语写作教程》就是顺应我国对外经济的发展，满足越来越多的外资企业及涉外企业对掌握规范的商务英语写作的人才的需求而编写的。

本教程共分13个单元，每个单元分为语言复习和商务写作两个部分。其中语言复习并非像语法教材一样面面俱到，而是提炼出关键语言点及容易出错的地方加以强调，通过大量的以商务活动为内容的例句和练习，使学习者在复习巩固英语语言知识的同时，了解商务英语的特点，掌握丰富的商务英语常用语句和词汇，为规范的商务英语写作打下坚实的基础；商务英语写作部分包括各种实用商务文本的介绍与写作训练，如各类商务信函、备忘录、会议记录、商务报告等，也是通过提供大量的范文样本、写作建议、常用语句和写作练习，使学习者不仅熟悉各类商务文本的体例和规范的要求，也能较好地掌握各类商务文本的写作技能。在每个单元的语言复习和商务写作之后都附有一定量的练习，就已经学过的语言点和商务写作进行再训练、再强化，目的是使读者能够做到举一反三，提高使用语言和商务写作的实际能力。本教程自2001年问世以来，受到广大读者的一致好评。为了更加方便读者学习，在第一版基础上，修订版主要增补了以下内容：

(1)增补了每一主题下的一些商务信函实例；

(2)对课文中的商务写作专业术语和一些语言难、重点作了注释；

(3)增加了一些有用句型；

(4)增加了商务英语写作常用缩略语。

本教程适合各类学校英语专业、经贸专业、经贸英语专业的学生使用，也可供从事涉外经济贸易工作的人员及具有相当水平的自学者使用。

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Unit 1

Language Review

NOUNS
名词

The names of people, places, and things are called nouns. A noun may be a single word or a group of two or more words that function together as one name. Nouns are often divided into various classes such as **Common Nouns**, **Proper Nouns**, **Concrete Nouns**, **Abstract Nouns**, **Individual Nouns**, **Collective Nouns** and **Gerunds**. Nouns have the properties, or characteristics, of person, number, gender, and case. Nouns can be used as subject of sentence, direct and indirect object of verb, object of preposition, appositive and predicate nominative(名词是表示人名、地名、事物名称及抽象概念名称的词，可分为普通名词与专有名词两大类。普通名词可分为个体名词、集体名词、物质名词和抽象名词，以及动名词。名词自身的属性包括人称、数、性和格。名词在句中可作主语，动词的直接或间接宾语，介词宾语，同位语和表语。).

1. Plurals(复数)

a. *To form the plural of a singular noun, ordinarily add* -s to the singular form(通常情况下，名词词尾加-*s* 即构成复数)：
typewriter \ *typewriters*; *office* \ *offices*

b. If the singular form of a noun ends in ***ch***, ***sh***, ***s***, ***x***, *or* ***z***, *add* ***-es***(以 ch,sh,s,x,或 z 结尾的词加-es)：
miss \ misses; tax \ taxes;lunch \ lunches;brush \ brushes

c. *If the singular form of a noun ends in* ***y*** *and the* ***y*** *is preceded by a consonant, change the* ***y*** *to* ***i*** *and add* ***-es***. *If the* ***y*** *is preceded by a vowel, add* ***-s***(以“辅音字母＋y”结尾的词变 y 为 i 再加-es;而以“元音字母＋y”结尾的词直接加-s)：
company \ companies; copy \ copies; journey \ journeys

d. *Many singular nouns form their plurals by changing vowel or vowels within the word*(有些名词可通过内部元音改变构成复数)：
man \ men; foot \ feet; mouse \ mice; tooth \ teeth; woman \ women
But:German \ Germans

e. *To form the plural forms, some singular nouns ending in* ***f*** *or* ***fe*** *must change the* ***f*** *or* ***fe*** *to* ***v*** *and add* ***-es***(一些以 f 或 fe 结尾的名词通常将 f 或 fe 变 v,再加-s 或-es 构成复数)：
leaf \ leaves;wife \ wives;half \ halves
But: safe \ safes; chief \ chiefs; proof \ proofs

f. *When the compound is written as one word, form the plural at the end of the word; when the compound is written with either a space or a hyphen between the words, make plural the main word in the compound*(复合名词可在最后一个名词词尾加-s 或-es 构成复数,有时也可以在主要名词词尾加-s):
toothbrush \ toothbrushes; letterhead \ letterheads; footnote \ footnotes
But: passerby \ passersby; sales manager \ sales managers; mother-in-law \ mothers-in-law; bulletin board \ bulletin boards; editor in chief \ editors in chief

g. *The plurals of letters, numbers, symbols, signs, regarded as words, are formed by adding an apostrophe and -s. This is the only time that an apostrophe is used to form a plural*(字母、数字、符号等可通过加"'",再加-s 构成复数):
5 \ 5's; F.O.B. \ F.O.B.'s; $ \ $'s

h. *Some nouns are always or almost always singular and require singular verbs when they are used as subjects*(有些名词单复数同形,作主语时谓语通常用单数形式):

equipment	education	advice	music	information	merchandise
weather	assistance	integrity	civics	attention	cooperation

i. *Some nouns are always or almost always plural in meaning and in usage*(另有一些名词通常以复数形式出现,谓语也须用复数形式):

premises	pliers	scissors	trousers	thanks	remains
credentials	goods	auspices	riches	proceeds	belongings

j. *Memorize the correct plural form of these personal titles*(下列表示称谓的复数形式需要记住):

singular:	Mr.	Mrs.	Miss	Ms.	Dr.
plural:	Messrs.	Mmes.	Misses	Mses.	Drs.

2. Possessives(所有格)

a. *To form the possessive of a noun, add an apostrophe and -s; if the noun ends in -s, add an apostrophe only*(名词后加"'"再加-s,可以构成名词所有格;假如名词以-s 结尾,则仅须加"'"):
woman \ woman's; children \ children's; ladies \ ladies'; boys \ boys'; boss \ boss' or boss's

b. *To form the possessive of a compound noun, add the apostrophe or 's to the end of the word only*(复合名词所有格在最后一个词词尾加"'",或加"'s"):
father-in-law's; policyholder's; general managers'; editor in chief's

c. *Joint ownership is shown by making the last noun possessive. If each noun is made possessive, it indicates separate ownership of two or more items*(名词共用"'s"表示共同拥有某事物;名词后分别加"'s"则表示各自拥有):
Jack and Bill's car (two persons owning one car)

Jack's and Bill's cars (two persons owning two or more cars)

d. *There is an idiomatic use of the possessive in expressions involving time, amounts, or personification*(一些有关时间、数量和人格化的所有格形式已形成固定表达):
one day's pay; four months' leave; a year's pay; season's greeting; today's weather; for pity's sake; an hour's work; a dollar's worth; for conscience' sake; two weeks' work; a month's vacation

e. *With the exception of such nouns as those illustrated above, nouns that name inanimate objects should never be written or spoken as possessive, but use an* ***of*** *phrase instead*(除上述 d 中所列举的固定表达以外,表示无生命事物的名词通常不用"'s"所有格,而用 of 结构代替):
hood of the car; top of the desk; a one-week vacation; a three-year project

Business Writing

BUSINESS STYLE
商务英语写作规范

1. Principles of Good Business Writing(商务英语写作的原则)

Good business writing involves using the same techniques and principles as are used in any good writing. Business people can't afford the time for, nor the expense of, a personal visit each time they want to transact business in various parts of the world, so they make phone calls, write letters, send faxes, or e-mails instead. Even telephone messages must be put in writing for understanding and formal confirmation[1] by both sender and receiver and as a source for later reference.

In order to achieve good communication, the following five "**Cs**" principles should be taken into consideration.

Clarity(清晰) Message must be expressed clearly so that the reader will understand. To get this, we should keep in mind the purpose of our correspondence. A point that is ambiguous will cause trouble to both sides. You must have a clear idea of what you wish to convey to the reader. When you are sure about what to say, say it in plain, simple words. Good, straightforward, and simple English is what is needed for business communication. To make your message clear, you must present it in well-constructed sentences and paragraphs, and include necessary transitional words or expressions to link them up. The following are some ways to help to achieve clarity:

(1) Use simple, short words and simple sentence structure.

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Compare: after \ subsequent; large \ substantial; use \ utilize; during \ in the course of; we enclose \ enclosed please find

(2) Avoid using words with different meanings.

Compare: We shall take a firm line with the firm.
We shall take a strong line with the firm.

(3) Put together words with close relation.

Compare: The L/C[2] must reach us not later than 8 October for arranging shipment[3].
The L/C must reach us for arranging shipment not later than 8 October.

They bought a bicycle in Beijing in a small shop which costs $25.00.
They bought a bicycle for $25.00 in a small shop in Beijing.

He was warned not to drink water even in a restaurant which had not been boiled.
He was warned not to drink water which had not been boiled even in a restaurant.

(4) Use active voice.

Compare: A telex was sent by us yesterday.
We sent you a telex yesterday.

The application was completed by the student.
The student completed the application.

The salary increase was received by all employees.
All employees received the salary increase.

Conciseness(简明) Clarity and conciseness often go hand-in-hand. It means saying things in the fewest possible words. A concise business writing should say things briefly but completely without losing clearness or courteousness. In short, say everything that must be said but do not waste your reader's time in words. Keep your sentences short, avoid unnecessary repetition, and eliminate excessive details. The following are some ways to help your writing be concise:

(1) Shorten wordy expressions.

Compare: We have begun to export our machines to countries abroad.
We have begun to export our machines.

For the amount of $320 you can buy the motor.
For $320 you can buy the motor.

You have won due to the fact that you arrived early.
You have won because you arrived early.

(2) Use words to replace phrases or clauses.

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Compare: In the event that you speak to Mr. Mood in regard to production, ask him to give consideration to the delivery order.[4]

If you speak to Mr. Mood about production, ask him to consider the delivery order.

We require furniture which is of the new type.

We require new-type furniture.

For your information we enclose a catalogue.

We enclose a catalogue.

Correctness（准确） Correctness here refers to appropriate and grammatically correct language, factual information and accurate reliable figures, as well as the right forms and conventions. Errors of fact, such as price quotations and delivery dates[5] are often oversights that are results of careless typing, inadequate proofreading, or too hasty correction of erasures. No excuse can make such errors acceptable in business letters. All facts should be checked and double checked. Errors can also be made because reference books are not consulted when necessary. Special attention should also be paid to names of goods, specification[6], quantity, figures, units, etc. The following is important to reach correctness:

(1) Verify spelling.

(2) Select correct words or phrases. The following examples illustrate how word choice affects meaning.

Compare: Anyone can learn to type.

Any one of us can learn to type.

Everyone is practicing comparison shopping.

Every one of us is practicing comparison shopping.

(3) Insert appropriate punctuation.

Compare: "The Navy," says Captain Mitchel Stern, "will have more missile carriers."

The Navy says Captain Mitchel Stern will have more missile carriers.

Concreteness(具体) To make the message specific, definite and vivid is the key point of concreteness. Whether you are writing an initial letter or a reply, you must make sure that your letter contains all the information your reader needs to act upon. Put yourself in the reader's place. Avoid incomplete information. It is necessary to check the message carefully before it is sent out. Keep the following in mind in that they will help your writing

to be concrete:

(1) Use concrete modifiers.

Compare: The auditorium will seat approximately 1,000 people.
The auditorium will seat 986 people.

I need the printout 'as soon as possible.
I need the printout by 3 p.m. today.

The students completed a worthwhile project.
The students cleared $750 from their project.

(2) Avoid opinions or generalizations.

Compare: Various aspects of this equipment make it a good choice.
This machine is a good choice because it is more compact and less expensive than any other one on the market.

These brakes can stop a car within a short distance.
These Goodson Power Brakes can stop a 2-ton car within 24 feet.

Our printer is faster than the leading competitor's model.
Our model X192 printer operates at a speed of 4,300 lines per minute.

Courtesy(礼貌) Courtesy is not mere politeness. It means using good human relation skills. The courteous writer should be sincere and tactful, thoughtful and appreciative. Treat the reader with respect and friendliness and write as if you care about the reader. Never show your anger in a letter. If the occasion demands firmness, deal with it that way. However, it must be remembered that a letter may be firm and still be courteous. Courtesy is a positive value. It is not neutral or negative. Just because you have not insulted the reader is no sign that the tone of your letter is satisfactory. The tone must convey positive goodwill, positive warmth, and positive interest in the reader as a human being. For best results, and also as a matter of courtesy, answer letters promptly. The following are ways to make your writing be courteous:

(1) Say **Thanks when** others do favor for you. Say **Please when** you ask for something from others. Say **Sorry when** you can not satisfy others' requests.

(2) Use Positive words and expressions instead of negative words and expressions.

Compare: The office is closed after 4.
The office is open until 4.

We cannot have these figures for you before next week.
We will have these figures for you next week.

We have found out that your delinquency[8] with regard to your account by $3.
We noticed that your account is short by $3.

(3) Write naturally and sincerely.

Compare: I had hoped that a favorable consideration on your request could be possible.
I am sorry we cannot approve your request.

I have pleasure in informing you.
I am pleased to tell you.

Please be good enough to advise us.
Please tell us.

(4) Use "you approach": Courtesy and tact are sometimes achieved by what is called a "you approach". In other words, your letter should be reader-oriented and sound as if you share your reader's point of view.

Compare: Please accept our apologies for the delay.
We hope you have not been seriously inconvenienced by the delay.

I think your report was well done.
Your report was well done.

We will accept bids[9] until June 10.
You may submit a bid until June 10.

2. Organization(组织)

A good business letter must be well organized. You must plan in advance everything you want to say; you must say everything necessary to your message; and then you must stop. A business writing is organized differently from other kinds of writing. It almost always follows the same format, which consists of three parts: introduction (or opening), body, and closing. Take the business letter writing as an example:

Introduction(信头) The introduction or opening, is the headline of the letter. It starts with a clear-cut statement of what the letter is about, or the purpose of the letter.

Getting to the point immediately—presenting the message of your letter first, then developing details—is writing deductively. In negative letter, the process is reversed—the details are presented first, then the point of the letter is developed from the details. This is called writing inductively. Keep the first sentence short and easy to understand and keep the opening paragraph short, probably not more than two or three lines. A short opening paragraph is easier to read, and it does not intimidate the

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reader.

There are instances in opening paragraphs when you do not get to the point immediately; these occur wherever the letter contains negative or bad news—refusing credit or telling a job applicant that he or she was not hired, for example. The details that explain the bad news are given first and, if possible, a substitute is offered. If a substitute cannot be offered, keep the opening statement neutral—sometimes even thank you will serve the purpose. By offering a substitute or a neutral statement, you can keep the tone of the letter positive. A rejection can be antagonistic; a substitution offers a positive, courteous solution to a situation that might otherwise be embarrassing to someone.

Body(正文) In the opening you have told the reader what the letter is about. The body of the letter develops the opening and adds any needed details. For example, the opening of a letter tells the reader that the order that was placed has been shipped. The body adds the details of how it is being shipped—parcel post or delivery service; when it can be expected; and additional information—if the order is completed or if substitutions were made. It could tell how the billing[10] will be done if payment did not accompany the order. The body contains all of the information that the reader needs to know to make decisions.

Closing(信尾) The closing is a short and courteous goodbye. It does not include anything that has not already been introduced. It makes action on the part of the readers easy. The closing is specific; it gives times and dates.

Avoid participal or fragment conclusions. There should be no "Hoping to hear from you." or "With best wishes, I remain..."

The closing is the summary of the letter; it emphasizes the action that you want the reader to take; it states exactly what you want the reader to do, and it leaves the impression of courtesy. Like any goodbye, jog the reader's memory if there is something that you want the reader to do, but keep the closing short and friendly.

Now read the following two sample letters. Notice the redundancies[11] in the first that are eliminated in the second.

Sample 1

Dear Ms. Rodriguez,

I am very pleased with the invitation that I received from you inviting me to make a speech for the National Association of Secretaries on June 11. Unfortunately, I regret that I cannot attend the meeting on June 11. I feel that I do not have sufficient time to prepare myself because I received your invitation on June 3 and there is not enough time to prepare myself completely for the speech.

Yours truly,
×××

Sample 2

Dear Ms. Rodriguez,

I am pleased with the invitation to speak to the National Association of Secretaries. Unfortunately, I cannot attend the meeting on June 11.

I feel that I will not have sufficient time to prepare myself because I received your invitation on June 3.

I will be happy to address your organization on another occasion if you would give me a bit more notice. Best of luck with your meeting.

Sincerely yours,
×××

3. Electronic Mail(电子邮件)

When you use a computer terminal to communicate either inside or outside your organization, you should not abandon the basic principles of business writing. You should still strive for clarity, conciseness, correctness, concreteness and courtesy as you would do in more traditional forms of business writing. But when using electronic mail, there are a few additional provisions:

(1) Keep your message short: You want your message to fit on one screen, whenever possible, thus keeping all important information visible at once.

(2) Be sure your message is easy to answer: Let your reader know at the start what your subject is and what you want done.

(3) Beware of electronic eavesdropers.

SWYYXZJC

Notes

1. confirmation: the act of confirming, of making something certain or binding 确认
   This offer is subject to our final confirmation.
2. L/C: letter of Credit 信用证
   commercial L/C:商业信用证;confirmed L/C:保兑信用证;documentary L/C:跟单信用证;irrevocable L/C:不可撤消信用证;traveller's L/C:旅游信用证
3. shipment: the acting of putting goods on a ship 船运,装运
   These goods are ready for shipment.
   We hope that you will arrange shipment next week.
4. delivery order (often shortened as D.O. or d/o): 提货单
5. delivery date: the time at which the ordered goods will be delivered 交货期
   According to the contract, the delivery date should be no later than July 15.
6. specification: any detailed description of the form and content of an article or commodity, or the process by which something is produced 产品(规格)说明
   The specifications of the building have been enclosed.
7. printout: a document or processed data from the output unit of a computer, presented in the form of readable printed matter on paper(电脑)打印文件
8. delinquency: the state of having failed to pay by the due date 欠款;逾期未收账款
   Delinquencies are increasing because more and more people are delaying their mortgage payments.
   Long-term delinquencies often turn out to be bad debts.
9. bid: an offer to buy something at a stated price 报盘,报价
   A bid may be taken back at any time before a buyer has formally told the seller that he accepts it.
   The bid I made was higher than his.
10. bill(billing): bill refers to a written document with charges for supplying goods or services 票据,账单;billing means performing the act of making and sending out bills (or invoices) 开账单,开发票
    Please bill me for these articles I purchased.
    The billing department is just over there.
11. redundancy: here refers to the words in business writing that are more than necessary 冗语
    The redundancy of his style makes his report so tiring.

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