

高等学校商务英语系列规划教材



外贸 函电与单证

BUSINESS ENGLISH
CORRESPONDENCE AND
DOCUMENTS

主 编 李 蓉
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Business English Correspondence and Documents

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· 北京 ·

内 容 简 介

本书共分4部分18章,从理论上系统地介绍了外贸活动中外贸函电与电子邮件的特点、格式、组成部分、写作原则及注意事项等,并通过信函和邮件样信,逐一展现了建立业务关系、询价、报盘、还盘、订货、支付、包装、装运、保险、索赔等各个磋商环节,系统地介绍了外贸英语函电的专业用语、写作特点、写作技巧,并通过理论联系实际的方法,训练学生正确使用信函常用的句型和词汇,达到熟练地翻译和撰写业务信函的目的。

本书适合高等院校经贸方向的学生使用,也适合有志于从事国际贸易的人士参考使用。

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前言 Preface

外贸函电在涉外经济活动中起着联络业务、沟通交流的作用,对市场的开拓和贸易的发展起着积极的作用。《外贸函电与单证》从进出口业务实际出发,以国际贸易流程为主线,将国际贸易业务知识与英语融于一体,旨在帮助学生在了解并熟悉外贸各个环节的同时,能与客户进行有效的沟通。此外,由于信息技术的发展,电子邮件已广泛应用于信息交流,大大加快了信息传播的速度,因此本书以邮件为主进行信函的展示。本书首先从理论上系统地介绍外贸活动中外贸函电与电子邮件的特点、格式、组成部分、写作原则及注意事项等,然后通过信函和邮件样信,逐一展现了建立业务关系、询价、报盘、还盘、订货、支付、包装、装运、保险、索赔等各个磋商环节,系统地介绍了外贸英语函电的专业用语、写作特点、写作技巧,并通过理论联系实际的方法,训练学生正确使用信函常用的句型和词汇,达到熟练地翻译和撰写业务信函的目的。

本书分为4部分:第1部分系统介绍与外贸函电相关的理论知识及其他常用的商务写作文体;第2部分由易渐难地从寻找客户、磋商订单、签订合同、处理纠纷和其他贸易信函等方面逐一展现外贸业务的各个环节,介绍了建立业务关系、询价、报盘、还盘、订货、支付、包装、装运、保险、索赔、代理等内容;第3部分则结合对外贸易的各个环节,提炼常见的单据,通过展现贸易过程中常见的各类单据,帮助学生熟悉和掌握相关的外贸单证;第4部分为外贸函电实训部分,以实训的方式让学生切实掌握各类信函和邮件的写作。

本书把外贸函电与相关的国际贸易实务课程的内容有机地衔接起来,在内容的编排上充分体现以学生为中心的原则,向学生展现真实的外贸业务环节,诱发学生的学习兴趣,激发学生的学习主动性。特别是实训部分的贸易单证,为实践教学提供了相应的素材,便于学生将学习与实习、就业联系起来,充分调动学生学习的积极性和参与性。本书适合高等院校经贸方向的学生使用,也适合有志于从事国际贸易的人士参考使用。

本书是2014年广西高等教育教学改革工程项目(一般A类)课题“地方高校商务英语核心类课程资源整合与教学方法优化”(2014JGA149)和2014年广西高等教育教改工程项目(一般B类)《基于数字化平台的广西独立学院立体化英语写作评改模式的研究与实践》(2014JGB400)的阶段性成果,由桂林理工大学外国语学院的李蓉、赵凤玉担任主编,桂林理工大学外国语学院的阳有明、广西师范大学漓江学院外语系的赵莉莉、Oklahoma City University的覃璇担任副主编。全书具体的编写分工为:赵莉莉负责编写第1~4章;李蓉负责编写第5~9章及第11~15章;赵凤玉负责编写第10章及第4部分;阳有明和覃璇负责后期电子文稿的创作与编辑。在本书的编写过程中,傅广生教授、莫运复教授、胡金

副教授提供了宝贵的意见；桂林理工大学外语学院英语系的部分老师也参与了资料收集与整理，在此表示衷心的感谢。此外，本书的顺利出版也离不开桂林理工大学教材科有关领导和同仁的关心和支持，在此一并致谢。

为答谢广大教师对本书的厚爱，方便教学，编者特向选用此书做教材的教师免费提供每章练习的参考答案，有需要的教师可发邮件至编者的邮箱 huangxinyilr@163.com 及 757427905@qq.com 索取。

由于编者水平有限，书中疏漏之处在所难免，敬请广大读者、学界同仁赐教指正。

编者
2014年9月

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Part 1

An Introduction to Business Correspondence

Introduction to the Business Correspondence

Questions for Discussion

1. Why is business correspondence so important in our daily life?
2. How many kinds of business letters do you know?
3. What are the features of business correspondence?



Section 1 Definition of Business Correspondence

Generally speaking, correspondence, including letters, e-mails, newsgroups, Internet forums, blogs, etc., refers to non-concurrent, remote communication through exchange of letters between people. A businessperson writes and receives letters in his or her day-to-day transactions, which may be called business correspondence. Business correspondence or business letter is a written communication between two parties for the purpose of achieving specific business objectives. For example, a businessman may write letters to supplier of goods and also receive letters from the suppliers; on the other hand, a customer may write letters to the businessperson for seeking information about availability of goods, price, quality, sample etc. or placing an order for purchase of goods. Therefore, business letters can be defined as a medium or means through which views are expressed and ideas or information is communicated in writing in a process of business activities. According to a Chinese chief executive of an import and export company, the prior job for one who aims to become a foreign trade salesperson is to improve his or her capability to write business letters effectively.

Business correspondence is also written by people in connection with their work, for example, a businessperson, an executive or a manager might find it necessary to write to the members of his or her staff, complimenting them on their good performance, or rebuking them for negligence of some kind or other. Meanwhile, he or she might have to discuss internal administrative matters with managerial colleagues, or make reports to seniors and/or directors.



Section 2 Functions of Business Correspondence

Nowadays business operations are not restricted to any locality, state or nation because production takes place in one area while consumption takes place everywhere. Thus, business letters should be promotional, motivational, informational, and persuasive. The purpose is to:

1. Maintain Proper Relationship

Business activities are not confined to any one area or locality in the modern society, as the businessmen and customers are scattered throughout the country. Thus, there is a need to maintain proper relationship among them by using appropriate, economical and convenient means of communication. In this case, business letters play an important role, in which the customers can write to the businessperson seeking information about products and the businessperson in turn can supply various information to customers. This helps them to carry on business on national and international basis economically and conveniently.

2. Create and Maintain Goodwill

The messages containing in business letters will exert certain impact on the readers. The professional and appropriate expressions and writing skills in business letters might give readers good impression and thus arouse their trust in the products and service of a company. This might be really valuable for the success of a deal.

3. Serve as Evidence

It is impossible for a trader to memorize all facts and figures in a conversation that normally takes place among businesspersons. Through letters, he can keep a record of all facts for organizing the transactions of the international trade. Thus, letters can also serve as evidence in case of dispute between two parties.

4. Expand Business

Business letters are used to convey the vast amount of information regarding competing products, prevailing prices, promotion, market activities, etc., so as to complete day-to-day business operations. If the trader has to run from place to place to get information, it will simply result in loss of time. But through business letters, he can make all inquiries about the products and the markets. He can also receive orders from different countries and, thus enhance sales.



Section 3 Types of Business Correspondence

Business correspondence is the most formal method of communication. It is addressed to a particular person or organization. Therefore, we cannot discuss business correspondence writing without considering the trade process of import and export. The following table shows correspondence between the exporter and the importer in international transactions.

	The Exporter's Letters	The Importer's Letters
1	A letter for establishing business relationship	A letter for establishing business relationship
2	Replies from the potential customers	Replies from the potential customers
3		Letters of enquiry
4	Offer	
5		Counter-offer
6		Placing an order
7	Acknowledgment	
8		Payment terms
9	Packing	Packing
10	Shipment	Shipment
11	Insurance	Insurance
12		Complaints
13	Settlement with the complaints	

In addition, there are also other kinds of business letters which are not for trade but for other business or communication, such as memos, proposal letters, a covering letter, curriculum vitae (CV), resignation letter, recommendation letter, notice of meeting, minutes of meeting, and so on.



Section 4 Essential Qualities of a Good Business Letter

No one can succeed in business without being able to write GOOD business letters. A “good” business letter is the one that is written in GOOD English (or whatever other language is used) in clearly understandable words, and the one that is brief and to the point and, above all, is persuasive. What’s more, the quality of paper used in the letter, its size, color etc. also need special attention, because it creates a positive impression in the mind of the receiver. We may classify the qualities of

a good business letter into writing qualities and format qualities.

1. Writing Qualities

The writing qualities of a good business letter refer to the quality of language, its presentation, etc. These facilitate quick processing of the request and that leads to prompt action. The various writing qualities of a good business letter are discussed as follows:

(1) Simplicity. Simple and easy language should be used for writing business letters. Difficult words should be strictly avoided, as one cannot expect the reader to refer to the dictionary while reading letter.

(2) Clarity. The language should be clear, so that the receiver will understand the message immediately, easily and correctly. Ambiguous language creates confusion. The letter will serve the purpose if the receiver understands it in the same manner in which it is intended by the sender.

(3) Accuracy. The statements written in the letter should be accurate to the best of the sender's knowledge. Accuracy demands that there are no errors in the usage of language — in grammar, spellings, punctuations, etc. An accurate letter is always appreciated.

(4) Completeness. A complete letter is one that provides all necessary information to the readers. For example, in sending an order we should mention the desirable features of the goods, i.e., their quality, shape, color, design, quantity, date of delivery, mode of transportation, etc.

(5) Relevance. The letter should contain only essential information. Irrelevant information should not be mentioned while sending any business correspondence.

(6) Courtesy. Courtesy wins the heart of the reader. In business letters, courtesy can be shown/expressed by using words like please, thank you, etc.

(7) Neatness. A neat letter is always impressive. A letter, either handwritten or typed, should be neat and attractive in appearance. Overwriting and cuttings should be avoided.

2. Format Qualities

The format qualities of a good business letter refer to the appearance of the letter. It includes the quality, color and size of the paper used. Good quality paper gives a favorable impression in the mind of the reader, and helps in documenting the letters properly. The various format qualities of a good business letter are mentioned as follows:

(1) Quality of paper. The paper used should be in accordance with the economic status of the firm. From an economical point of view, quality paper should be used for original copy and ordinary paper may be used for duplicate copy.

(2) Color of the paper. It is better to use different colors for different types of letters, so that the receiver will identify the letters quickly and act promptly.

(3) Size of the paper. Standard size paper (A4) should be used while writing business letters. The size of the paper should be in accordance with the envelopes available in the market.

(4) Folding of letter. The letter should be folded properly and uniformly. Care should be taken to give minimum folds to the letter so that it will fit the size of the envelope. If window envelope is used then folding should be done in such a way that the address of the receiver is clearly visible

through the transparent part of the envelope.

(5) Envelope. The size and quality of the envelope also need special attention. The size of the letter should fit the size of the envelope. The business firms use different types of envelopes, such as ordinary envelope, window envelope, laminated envelope, etc. In window envelope there is no need to write the address of the receiver separately on the envelope. It is clearly visible through the transparent part on the face of the envelope known as window. In laminated envelope, a thin plastic sheet or cloth is pasted on the inner side that gives extra protection to letters from being damaged during transit.



I Fill in the blanks with proper words.

1. Business letters serve as a/an _____ in case of dispute in business transactions.
2. It is _____ for the businessmen to remember all facts without correspondence.
3. Business letters build _____ for a businessman.
4. Business letters are written to _____ information.
5. A business letter is the most _____ mode of communication.
6. Apart from ordinary envelopes, we may also use _____ or _____ envelopes for sending business letters.
7. To make a letter courteous, words like _____ and _____ should be used.
8. A business letter should contain only _____ information.
9. Accuracy demands no error in the usage of _____.
10. Business letters should be always neat and _____ in appearance.

II Write "T" for true statements and "F" for false statements.

1. A letter is a form of written communication. ()
2. Through business letters, personal contact can be maintained between buyer and seller. ()
3. Business letters lead to decline the goodwill of the firm. ()
4. A letter is a convenient and economic mode of communication. ()
5. Business letters do not help in removing misunderstanding between buyer and seller. ()

The Forms of Business Correspondence

Questions for Discussion

1. What are the differences between the block form and the indented form?
2. How many line spaces are usually set between parts in business correspondence?

Although daily business messages like e-mail or telephone are dominant nowadays, the printed business letter is still the preferred way to convey important information. A carefully crafted letter can be a powerful communication tool in the trade. To make sure that you are writing professional and effective business letters, it is necessary for you to use the acceptable business letter format and template. There are at least four kinds of format for business correspondence: block form, modified block form, simplified form and indented form.



Section 1 Block Form

In block form, the commonly used one, every part is aligned along the left margin. What's more, line spaces will be set up between parts.

The following is the layout of block form.

Letterhead (6-10 line spaces, depending on whether a letterhead is used)

(About 2 inches or 2 lines below letterhead)

Date

(2-3 line spaces)

Inside address

(1 line space)

Salutation

(1 line space — new paragraph)

Subject line

(1 line space — new paragraph)

Body**Paragraph 1**

(1 line space — new paragraph)

Paragraph 2

(1 line space — new paragraph)

Paragraph 3

(2 line spaces)

Complimentary close

(3 line spaces)

Signature

(2 line spaces)

Your name (typed)**Your title**

(1 line space)

Enclosure**Sample 1 The Block Form****BRIGADE QUARTERMASTERS CO., LTD.**

1234 Kennesaw Drive

Atlanta, Georgia 30332

August 24, 2014

Captain James T. Kirk

Starship Enterprise

Crab Nebula, Sector 031-P29

Dear Captain Kirk,

It has come to my attention that your company, the Cooking Store, has been late with paying the invoices for the past three months.

In order to encourage our customers to pay for their invoices before the due date, we have implemented a discount model where we'll give you 2% off your invoice if you pay us within 10 days after receiving the invoice.

I hope that everything is going well with you and your company. You are one of our biggest customers, and we appreciate your business. If you have any questions, you can feel free to contact me at (555) 555-5555.

Sincerely,

George P. Burdell
Account Executive

Enclosure



Section 2 Modified Block Style

The modified block style is a traditional and quite popular layout. This form is similar to the block form. However, complimentary closing and signature should appear to the right margin of the paper.

The following is the layout of modified block style.

Letterhead (6-10 line spaces, depending on whether a letterhead is used)
(About 2 inches or 2 lines below letterhead)

Date

(2-3 line spaces)

Inside address

(1 line space)

Salutation

(1 line space — new paragraph)

Subject line

(1 line space — new paragraph)

Body**Paragraph 1**

(1 line space — new paragraph)

Paragraph 2

(1 line space — new paragraph)

Paragraph 3

(2 line spaces)

Complimentary close

(3 line spaces)

Signature

(2 line spaces)

Your name (typed)**Your title**

(1 line space)

Enclosure**Sample 2 The Modified Block Form****BRIGADE QUARTERMASTERS CO., LTD.**

1234 Kennesaw Drive

Atlanta, Georgia 30332

August 24, 2014

Captain James T. Kirk

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Crab Nebula, Sector 031-P29

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I hope that everything is going well with you and your company. You are one of our biggest customers, and we appreciate your business. If you have any questions, you can feel free to contact me at (555) 555-5555.

Sincerely,

George P. Burdell
Account Executive

Enclosure



Section 3 Simplified Form

The simplified form is almost similar to block form, that's to say, all letter parts begin at the left margin. However, the difference lies in that this format includes a subject line but omits the salutation and signature.

The following is the layout of simplified form.

Letterhead (6-10 line spaces, depending on whether a letterhead is used)
(About 2 inches or 2 lines below letterhead)