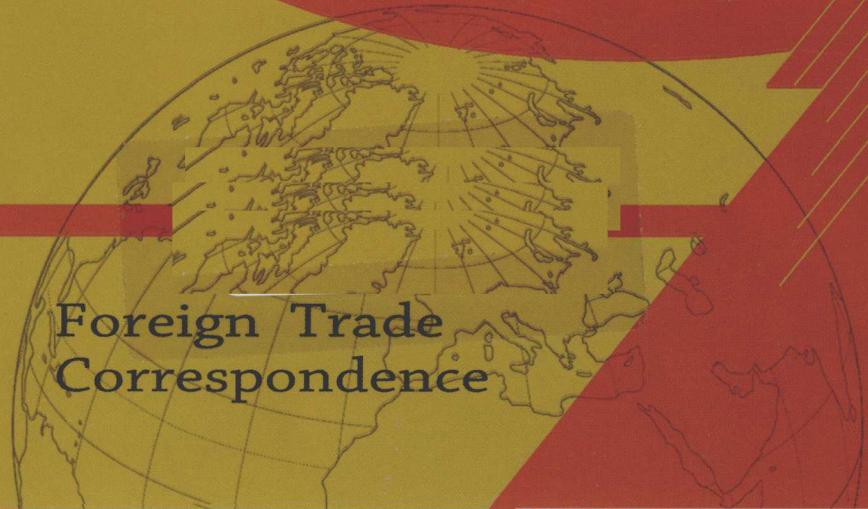


面向“十二五”高等院校应用型人才培养规划教材

外贸英语函电

周桂英◎编著



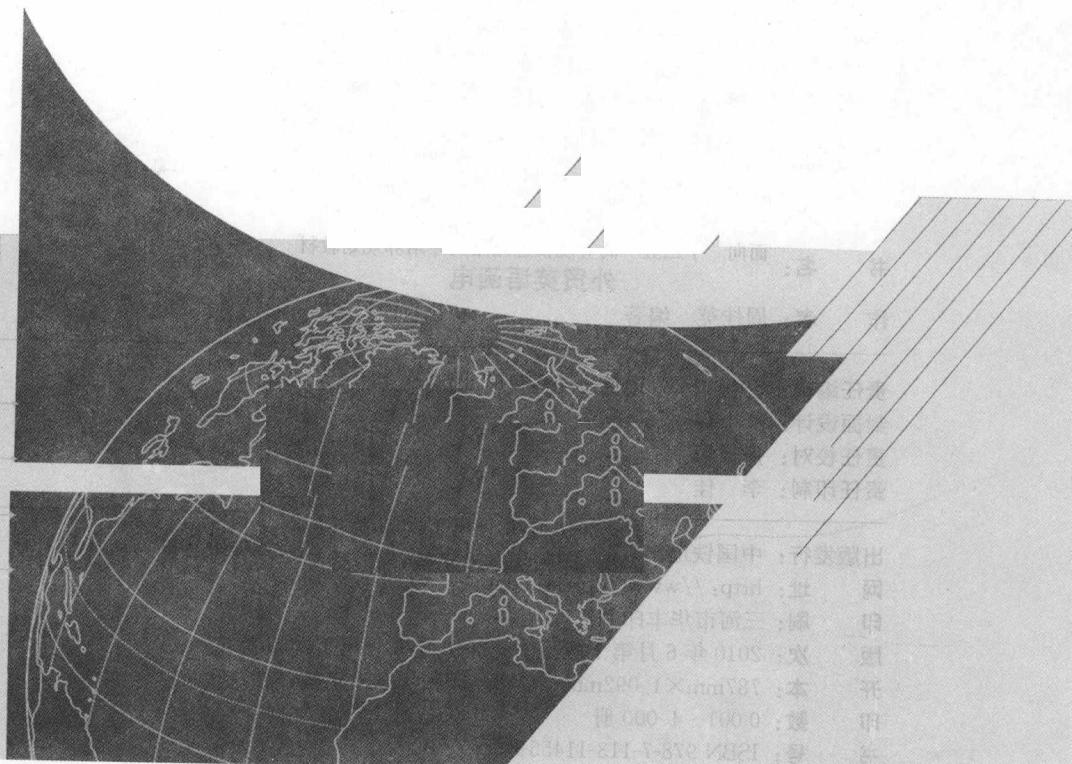
Foreign Trade
Correspondence

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作 者: 周桂英 编著

责任编辑: 曾亚非 电话: 010-51873014

封面设计: 薛小卉

责任校对: 张玉华

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前言

外贸英语函电

Foreign Trade Correspondence

Preface

外贸英语函电是外贸活动中与其他公司的主要沟通方式之一,了解外贸信函的写作原则和熟练地掌握外贸业务各个环节中的信函写作方法和技巧尤为重要。

为了使那些将来有志于从事外贸工作的学生能更快、更好地适应外经贸业务活动的需要,帮助他们系统地学习掌握外贸英语信函的格式、写作原则以及写作技巧和方法,帮助他们提高在外贸业务活动中正确熟练地用英语进行对外联络和对外沟通的能力,本书的编著者根据多年从事《外贸英语函电》的教学经验,以及多次到外贸公司和有关业务部门调研,积累的大量素材和写作经验,编写了这本《外贸英语函电》。

本书涵盖了外贸业务各个重要环节的信函写作:建立业务关系、询盘、报盘、还盘、下订单、销售/购货确认、付款条件、信用证的催开及修改、包装、装运、保险、投诉和索赔等。同时,还详细介绍了商务信函的写作原则、主要构成、基本格式以及国际商务合同的语言特点、主要内容和一些合同样本。此外,还介绍了一些特殊的贸易方式,如代理、招标等过程中相关信函的写作。每章的内容由以下几个部分组成:相关外贸知识介绍、相关信函的写作提纲、样信(和注释)、相关信函中常用的表达和配套的练习,课文内容的汉语译文。练习配有参考答案,便于老师的教学和学生的自学。

本书内容结构具有以下特点:

1. 每章相关外贸知识的介绍,使读者能够更快地进入到相关的场景中去;
2. 每章不但展示了很多样信,同时从实用的角度出发,还列出了每一类信件的写作提纲,即教给读者写作的方法;
3. 每章的练习里面都有相关信件写作的练习,让读者通过实践巩固所学内容。

本书可以作为高校的国际商务专业、国际经济与贸易专业以及外贸英语专业的本科、专科学生的教材,也可作为对该课程感兴趣的其他专业学生的辅修教材;那些参加外销员考试的学生可以把本书作为学习《商务英语》的一本好的参考书。此外,本书还可以作为正在从事外贸工作的专业人员以及打算将来从事外贸工作的人员的自学用书。

由于编著者水平有限,加上时间仓促,难免有错误或不妥之处,敬请专家和读者批评指正。

编著者





教学建议

□ 教学目的

外贸英语函电是对外贸易活动中与其他公司的主要沟通方式之一，贯穿于对外贸易活动的各个环节。本课程教学的目的在于让学生系统地了解外贸英语信函的写作原则和外贸英语信函的格式，熟练地掌握外贸业务各个环节中的具体信函的写作方法和技巧，提高他们使用英语来进行对外联络和沟通的能力，使那些将来有志于从事外贸工作的学生在走上工作岗位后能更快、更好地胜任外经贸业务的工作。

□ 前期需要掌握的知识

国际贸易理论、国际贸易实务、国际结算等课程的相关知识。

□ 教学内容、学习要点及课时安排

教学内容	学习要点	课时安排	书面作业建议
第1章 商务信函写作	(1)了解商务信函的基本写作原则 (2)掌握商务信函主要部分的写法及其布局 (3)了解信封的写法	2	Ex. I 和 II
第2章 建立业务关系	(1)了解公司获取潜在商家信息的渠道 (2)掌握建立业务关系的信函写作提纲 (3)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语、常用表达	2	Ex. IV 和 VII
第3章 询盘及回复	(1)掌握询盘信的写作提纲 (2)掌握回复询盘信件的提纲 (3)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语、常用表达	3	Ex. IV 和 VII
第4章 报盘	(1)了解报盘的定义及其分类 (2)掌握报盘信的写作提纲 (3)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语、常用表达	4	Ex. IV 和 VII



续上表

教学内容	讲授预期	学习要点	课时安排	书面作业建议
第 5 章 还盘及回复 IV 课 VI 课	(1)了解还盘的概念 (2)掌握还盘信件的写作提纲 (3)掌握回复还盘信件的写作提纲 (4)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语、常用表达	2	Ex. IV 和 VII 章 5 课 例句	
第 6 章 订货及回复 IV 课 VI 课	(1)了解订单的相关知识 (2)掌握订货信的写作提纲 (3)掌握回复订单信件的写作提纲 (4)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语、常用表达	2	Ex. IV 和 VII 章 6 课 例句	
第 7 章 销货/购货的确认 IV 课 VI 课	(1)了解销售/购货合同的主要内容 (2)掌握销售/购货确认信件的写作提纲 (3)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语、常用表达及合同中常用的表达	4	Ex. IV 和 VII 章 7 课 例句	
第 8 章 付款条件 IV 课 VI 课	(1)了解国际贸易中的三种主要付款方式 (2)了解汇付、托收和信用证的分类及其英语表达 (3)掌握磋商付款条件信件的提纲 (4)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语和常用表达	4	Ex. IV 和 VII 章 8 课 例句	
第 9 章 催开信用证 IV 课 VI 课	(1)了解信用证涉及的当事人及其主要内容 (2)了解信用证付款的六个步骤 (3)掌握催开信用证的信件写作提纲 (4)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语和常用表达	3	Ex. IV 和 VII 章 9 课 例句	
第 10 章 要求改证和展证 IV 课 VI 课	(1)了解审查信用证和要求改证和展证的知识 (2)掌握请求改证的信件写作提纲 (3)掌握要求展证的信件写作提纲 (4)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语和常用表达	3	Ex. IV 和 VII 章 10 课 例句	
第 11 章 包装 IV 课 VI 课	(1)了解包装的相关知识 (2)掌握进口商提出包装要求的信件的提纲 (3)掌握回复进口商包装要求的信件提纲 (4)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语和常用表达	2	Ex. IV 和 VII 章 11 课 例句	
第 12 章 装运 IV 课 VI 课	(1)了解有关装运的基本知识 (2)掌握装运指示信件的写作提纲 (3)掌握催促装运信件的写作提纲 (4)掌握装运通知信件的写作提纲 (5)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语和常用表达	3	Ex. IV 和 VII 章 12 课 例句	

续上表

教学内容	教学目标	学习要点	课时安排	书面作业建议
第 13 章 保险	(1)了解保险的相关知识 (2)掌握海洋货物运输保险中基本险和附加险的险种 (3)掌握请求出口商代为投保及其回复信件的写作提纲 (4)掌握向保险公司申请投保事宜的信件写作提纲 (5)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语、常用表达	五课时(D) 六课时(S) 四课时(E) 三课时(I)	Ex. IV 和 VII	章 13 业 重回乐章 Ex. IV 和 VII
第 14 章 投诉、索赔及理赔	(1)了解投诉和索赔的相关知识 (2)掌握投诉或索赔信件的写作大纲 (3)掌握不同情况下对索赔信件回复的提纲 (4)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语和常用表达	五课时(D) 六课时(S) 四课时(E) 三课时(I)	3	Ex. IV 和 VII
第 15 章 销售代理	(1)了解代理的相关知识 (2)掌握申请代理的信件提纲 (3)掌握回复代理申请的信件的提纲 (4)掌握本章信函写作中的专业术语、常用表达及代理协议中常用的表达	五课时(D) 六课时(S) 四课时(E) 三课时(I)	4	Ex. IV 和 VII
第 16 章 国际商务合同/协议	(1)了解国际商务合同/协议的语言特点 (2)掌握国际商务合同/协议的结构 (3)掌握国际商务合同/协议中所涉及的专业术语和常用的表达	五课时(D) 六课时(S) 四课时(E) 三课时(I)	4	章 16 业 重回乐章 Ex. IV, V 和 VII
第 17 章 招标和投标	(1)了解招标的相关知识 (2)了解国际招标的种类和招标程序 (3)掌握招投标中所涉及的专业术语和常用的表达	五课时(D) 六课时(S) 四课时(E) 三课时(I)	2	章 17 业 重回乐章 Ex. IV
课时总计			50	

说明:

(1)上述的课时安排,主要是针对国际商务专业、国际经济与贸易专业以及商务英语专业的本科学生;如果学生的英语基础非常好且大部分学生都通过了大学英语四级考试,学时可适当减少,比如 42 学时;对于以上专业的专科学生来说,课时可增加一些,如设为 60 学时;对于其他辅修专业的学生,课时可以设为 56 学时。

(2)练习的讲解时间包括在前面各章的教学时间中。

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外贸英语函电

Foreign Trade Correspondence

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point where we utilize means self-oriented to from one's own viewpoint. When we write letters, we often take it for granted that everyone is interested in our interests, our wishes and our properties. Actually this "we-situation" is not always true. In letter writing, it is a good principle to forget yourself for a while and think about the needs of your audience.

Chapter One: Business Letter Writing

Writing business letters is one of the most important means of communication with other companies, either in the same country or abroad because letters can present some details which can not be done by other means of communication. It serves two main functions. Firstly, it conveys a message. Secondly, it provides a permanent record for future reference and also valuable evidence in the event of legal disputes.

1. 1 Essential Writing Principles of Business Letters

There are many principles to be followed in writing English business letters, and they can be summarized into 7Cs: courtesy, consideration, completeness, clarity, conciseness, concreteness and correctness. Now let's look at them in detail.

1.1.1 Courtesy

Courtesy is very important in international business interaction because impoliteness may end the business relations and push potential customers to the competitors. Then how to make business letters sound courteous? The following tips may be very useful:

- (1) Try to avoid irritating and offensive statements in your letters.
- (2) Even if you receive a rude letter, try to write a reply courteously.
- (3) In addition, to write back promptly is also a matter of courtesy.

1.1.2 Consideration

When you write a business letter, put yourself in the reader's/receiver's shoes. That is, you should keep the reader's requests, needs, desires as well as his feelings in mind. Try to understand and respect your reader's point of view. If your reader thinks you are standing in his shoes, he will feel more comfortable. You can make yourself considerate by following the two tips below.

1. Using you-attitude/approach instead of we-attitude/approach

You-attitude/approach means the other party-oriented or from the other party's view-

point whereas we-attitude means self-oriented or from one's own viewpoint. When we write letters, we often take it for granted that everyone is interested in our products, our wishes and our problems. Actually this "we-attitude" is not always true. In letter writing, it is a good principle to forget yourself for a while and think about the people to whom you are writing. They probably will not be interested in our affairs unless we show them that they should be by appealing to their interests. We can accomplish this purpose most effectively by adopting the receiver's viewpoint. This is known as the "you-attitude" in business correspondence. Let's compare the following sentences.

- 1a: We allow you 2% discount for cash payment. (we-attitude/approach)
- 1b: You can enjoy 2% discount for cash payment. (you-attitude/approach)
- 2a: We will not be able to send you the pricelist this week. (we-attitude/approach)
- 2b: You can get the pricelist next week. (you-attitude/approach)

Obviously, 1a and 2a are from the writer's own viewpoint and 1b and 2b are from the reader's viewpoint and they are more easily accepted.

2. Using positive tone instead of negative tone

In business correspondence, we should create as positive a climate as possible, as words that create a positive image are more likely to help you achieve your objective than negative words. For example, you are more likely to persuade someone to do as you ask if you stress the advantages of doing so rather than the disadvantages of not doing so. Generally, positive tone gives readers a pleasant feeling whereas negative tone sounds unpleasant. For instance:

- 1a: This kind of unfortunate incident will not occur in the future. (negative tone)
- 1b: Future transactions will be handled with the utmost care. (positive tone)
- 2a: We can not release the names of our clients. (negative tone)
- 2b: Releasing the names of our clients would violate their privacy. (positive tone)

1.1.3 Completeness

Completeness means a business letter should include all the necessary information. Though a commercial communication should be concise, it must include all the relevant information. A complete letter should include whatever details are needed to generate the effect you want. If you leave out something the reader should know, it will be annoying and costly because it holds up business transactions and duplicates work. Omission of anything the reader wants to know causes suspicions, and may cost you a sale or even an important customer. And even worse, it may cause costly lawsuits.

If it is a reply to a letter previously received, it should answer all the questions or solve all the problems mentioned in that former letter. Before the letter is sent out, it is essential to check the message carefully to make sure that no information required is omitted. A complete letter may bring about expected result and be greatly beneficial to the company.

1.1.4 Clarity

In writing business letters, you must try to express your meaning clearly. Make sure that your letter is so clear that it cannot be misunderstood. The message should convey ex-



actly what you wish to say and is not liable to misunderstanding. A business letter is effective only when it communicates the necessary idea to its readers with clarity. In order to convey your meaning clearly, you should:

(1) Avoid using words/expressions which have different meanings or understandings or ambiguous meanings.

(2) Paragraph the letter carefully and properly. Generally if there are several points to make clear, be sure to follow the principle: "one point, one paragraph".

1.1.5 Conciseness

Conciseness means using the fewest words and concise sentences without losing completeness, courtesy and clarity. You should:

(1) Avoid using wordy or redundant expressions.

(2) Avoid unnecessary repetition.

(3) Use simple and plain words and short sentences.

(4) Use words to replace phrases or clauses.

1.1.6 Concreteness

Concreteness means that the message should be specific, definite and vivid. Effective business communication is marked by concrete words. In business letters, try to use expressions with precise meanings rather than general language. Let's compare the following two sentences.

1a: We have drawn on you as usual under your L/C.

1b: We have drawn on you our sight draft No. 1234 for the invoice amount US\$ 7 000 under your L/C No. 4567.

Obviously, the second sentence contains more specific information: specific draft and L/C and definite amount of the draft. That is what is required in the process of doing business. Comparatively, the first sentence conveys little valuable information. Nowadays everyone is busy with work, so the best way to make the business letter more efficient is to convey concrete information.

In addition, avoid using vague expressions but concrete words. Abstract words cover broad meanings, concepts or ideas. Compare the following two sentences.

2a: We are interested in your vehicles.

2b: We are interested in your HS800 racing cars.

The first sentence is too abstract whereas the second one is more specific.

1.1.7 Correctness

Business letters concern the duties and obligations of both parties, and sometimes they can be used as proofs. So correctness refers not only correct spelling, grammar and punctuation in the business letter, but also the accurate figures and correct use of technical terms or commercial jargons.

1.2 Main Sections in a Business Letter

Generally speaking, a business letter consists of ten sections:

(1) letter head or heading.

(2) date.

(3) inside name and address.

(4) salutation.

(5) subject line or caption.

(6) the body of the letter.

(7) complimentary close.

(8) the writer's signature and his job title or position or designation.

(9) enclosure.

(10) postscript.

For sections (1), (2), (3), (4), (6), (7), and (8), they are indispensable parts of a business letter whereas sections (5), (9), and (10) are optional. That is, the former parts must appear in a complete business letter. However, the latter parts may or may not appear in a business letter depending on the specific situations. If necessary, they may appear in the letter.

1.3 Writing of Each Section and Their Respective Positions in a Business Letter

1.3.1 Letter head or heading

Letter head or heading refers to the sender's name, address, telephone number, fax number etc.. Usually it is written in the upper right hand margin of the writing paper. Most business firms and other organizations use stationery with a center-printed letterhead that includes the name, the address, the postcode and the telephone number of the firm.

1.3.2 Date

It refers the date on which the letter is written. The date consists of the month, day and year. In writing dates, please note that "month" can be abbreviated, but "year" must be written in full. It is put two spaces below the letter head or put in the left-hand margin two spaces below the letter head.

1.3.3 Inside name and address

Inside name and address refers to the receiver's name and address. It is written in the left-hand margin about two spaces below the date. It appears exactly the same way as on the envelope. It is important to include the postcode in order to facilitate mechanical mail-sorting.





1.3.4 Salutation

Salutation is the polite greeting with which the writer starts his letter. The use of salutation depends on the writer's relationship with the receiver. The customary formal greeting in a business letter is "Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam" for addressing one person and "Dear Sirs" or "Dear Mesdames" or "Gentlemen" for addressing two or more persons. If the receiver is known to the writer personally, a warmer greeting is preferred, such as "Dear Mr. ×××" or "Dear Ms. ×××". Special attention should be paid to the punctuation used after the salutation: after "Dear Sir", "Dear Madam", "Dear Sirs", "Dear Mesdames", "Dear Mr. ×××" and "Dear Ms. ×××", a comma is used instead of a colon as in a Chinese letter. However, after "Gentlemen", a colon is used. In addition, the first letter of each word in the salutation should be capitalized.

Salutation is usually written two spaces below the inside name and address.

1.3.5 Subject line or caption

Subject line is actually the main topic of the letter. It is inserted between the salutation and the body of the letter. It is expressed as "Re:". For instance, if the letter is mainly concerned with the L/C No. 1234, then the subject line can be written as "Re: L/C No. 1234".

1.3.6 The body of a letter

This is the most important part of the letter. It contains the actual message of the letter. It states the writer's idea, opinion, purposes and wishes, etc.. So it should be carefully planned. It generally consists of three sections: the opening paragraph, paragraphs containing main points and the ending paragraph. The first section is the opening paragraph, introducing yourself if it is the first letter between you and the receiver, or referring to the previous letters if there were some correspondences. The second section contains the main points and it may consist of several paragraphs (Note: one point, one paragraph). The third section is the ending paragraph, indicating the writer's plan, expectations, wishes etc.

1.3.7 Complimentary close

Complimentary close is merely a polite way of ending a letter. It is in agreement with the salutation. The most commonly used complimentary closes are as follows:

The formal ones are "Yours faithfully" or "Faithfully yours" and "Yours truly" or "Truly yours". The less formal ones are "Yours sincerely" or "Sincerely yours".

Please note that the punctuation used after these complimentary closes is a comma, and the first letter of the complimentary close should be capitalized. Generally the complimentary close is put in the right hand margin two spaces below the body of the letter.

1.3.8 Signature and job designation or job title

It is common for the writer to sign his name immediately below the complimentary close. The signature can be made either in the writer's own name or in the company's name. If the writer represents his company, the company's name should come first, and then the writer's signature. Under the signature, generally comes the writer's printed name for easy identification. Below the writer's printed name is his or her designation. For instance:

ABC Company. E. I.

(Signature)

John Smith

Sales Manager

1.3.9 Enclosure

If something is enclosed in the letter, note it below the designation to draw the receiver's attention to find the enclosure(s) like "Encl: a pricelist" or "Encl(s): a catalogue and a pricelist". It can be put in the left hand margin two spaces below the designation of the writer.

1.3.10 Postscript

If the writer wishes to add something he forgot in the body of the letter or for the sake of emphasis, he may add a postscript two spaces below "Encl.". e.g.

P. S. : The samples will be mailed to you tomorrow.

1.4 The Layout of the Above 10 Sections in a Business Letter

The layout for a complete business letter is displayed in Exhibit 1.1.

Exhibit 1.1 The Layout for All Sections in Business Letters

1. letter head or heading

2. date on which the letter is written

3. inside name and address

4. salutation

5. subject line or caption

6. the body of the letter

7. complimentary close

8. the writer's signature and his job title

9. enclosure

10. postscript