

新编商务英语写作

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Business English Writing

清华大学出版社

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清华大学出版社
北 京

内 容 简 介

本书结合我国外贸业务的实际,通过大量实例介绍国际商务书信的特点、格式和结构,商业语汇以及有关外贸业务的英语表达方式和句型结构。作者系统地遴选出各类实用信函实例,从样信中挑出常用的函电用语,进行精讲与分析。除此之外,设置了知识链接板块,介绍相关的商务背景和常识,扩展了读者的视野。每章后设置了常用语句、信件赏析和形式多样的练习,以帮助读者把基础英语技能和外贸英语知识有机地结合起来,使学生具备撰写国际商务英语书信的能力。

本书按商务工作中实际操作顺序划分章节,系统地讲述了有关商业关系的建立、询价和报价、还价和磋商、订单的签订、付款、保险和代理、装运发货、投诉和索赔以及各种与商务相关的社交信函的写作和分析,不仅有利于读者对商务工作的了解,更方便读者选择性地学习和查询。

本书的读者对象主要为国际经济与贸易及相关专业的本科生、高职学生,以及从事国际贸易业务的相关人员。

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前 言

随着世界经济的日益全球化,中国与世界各国的交往日益频繁,国际贸易发展迅猛,因此,我国对国际商务人才的需求量也在不断增加。与此同时,相关的学习书籍内容也应与时俱进。《新编商务英语写作》的出版是应时之需,本书除了注重外贸英语信函的业务特色外,还突出了当今英语函电文字简明、风格自然亲和的特点,更侧重于语言的运用技巧,以适应当今外贸业务发展的需要。

本书突出教学内容的实用性和针对性,在编写方式上结合我国国际贸易业务的特点,每一单元都有与外贸英语函电相关内容的写作要领及技巧介绍,列举了大量的样例及详细的注释,以及相关知识链接,便于学生自学。为了帮助学生巩固、消化所学的知识要点,提高对知识的运用能力,我们在书后设置了练习,以帮助读者把基础英语技能和外贸英语知识有机地结合起来,使学生具备撰写国际商务英语书信的能力,满足时代对有效从事国际经贸信息沟通专门人才的需求。练习答案可从清华大学出版社网站下载。

本书由天津清大瀚苑教育咨询有限公司进行内文版面设计,进一步增添了本书的可读性和观赏性,更适合现代高等院校和高等职业学校使用。本教材专为应用型国际贸易专业的教学撰写,也可作为职业资格考前培训的教材,还可作为公司、企业在第一线处理商务信息的人士参考使用。

本书由张雪莹担任主编,朱蕾任副主编,天津科技大学徐睿琨、刘屹环、崔双岁、张苏辰、高大龙、杨婉盈、李芝婷、梁婧、王书雅、赵棣、张子锋在编写过程中也做了很多工作。本书的编写还得到了多方面的帮助和支持,在此一并表示感谢。由于编者水平、经验有限,不足之处在所难免,欢迎广大读者批评指正。作者邮箱为:zhangxueying2009@gmail.com。

编 者

2010年9月

目录

1	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge at Beginning to Study This Book ——Structure and Layout of International Business Letters 商务信函的框架与结构
23	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit One Establishing Business Relations 第一单元 建立商务往来
47	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Two Inquiry 第二单元 询盘
73	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Three Replies to Inquiries 第三单元 询盘回复
99	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Four Offer and Counter-offer 第四单元 报盘与还盘
125	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Five Orders and Executing Orders 第五单元 订货及执行订单
151	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Six Sales Promotion 第六单元 推销
177	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Seven Terms of Payment 第七单元 付款方式
207	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Eight Shipment 第八单元 运输
231	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Nine Insurance 第九单元 保险
255	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Ten Complaint, Claim and Adjustment 第十单元 投诉与索赔
285	<input type="checkbox"/> References 参考文献

Knowledge at Beginning to Study This Book

——Structure and Layout of International Business Letters

商务信函的框架与结构



Business English Writing

【Outline】

A business letter is usually composed of seven parts:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> the letterhead | <input type="checkbox"/> the date |
| <input type="checkbox"/> the inside name and address | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> the salutation | <input type="checkbox"/> the body of the letter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> the complimentary close | <input type="checkbox"/> the signature. |

“The pen is the tongue of mind.”

Letter writing is an art. Since inception of writing, we have been using letters to convey our message. A letter is a warm-blooded substitute for a personal visit. It should be written in a way that it touches the heart of the receiver and conveys the exact message and emotion of the sender. As such, the matter of the letter should be properly thought out. One should know the implied significance of the letter. A letter should have continuity, logic, emphasis and purpose. A letter loses its freshness and fascination, if an expression is misused or abused. For an impressive letter writing breathes the personality into your letter. John B. Oplycke once remarked, “What makes a letter alive? What makes it breathe and pulsate? What makes us read a letter again and again? The answer is personality.”

Like a living person, a letter should have a personality and a structure. It is mainly comprised of the heading, body and consistency, layout and setting. The salutation and subscription should be proper and appropriate according to the status of the writer and addressee, and the occasion. The letters may be personal or social, public or private, formal or informal, business or employment application and academic or educational. Each kind of letter has its own particular form and function.

A good letter is like a banker's cheque. A good business letter can fetch money because words are not only wealth and wisdom but the juice of modern civilization. A letter should be lively, lovely, musical and picturesque, but simple. A personal letter to a friend or a relative should be written by hand. It assumes warmth, which no machine can achieve.

Structure of International Business Letters

A business letter is a letter written in formal language, usually used when it is written from one business organization to another, or for correspondence between such organizations and their customers, clients and other external parties. The overall style of letter will depend on the relationship between the parties concerned.

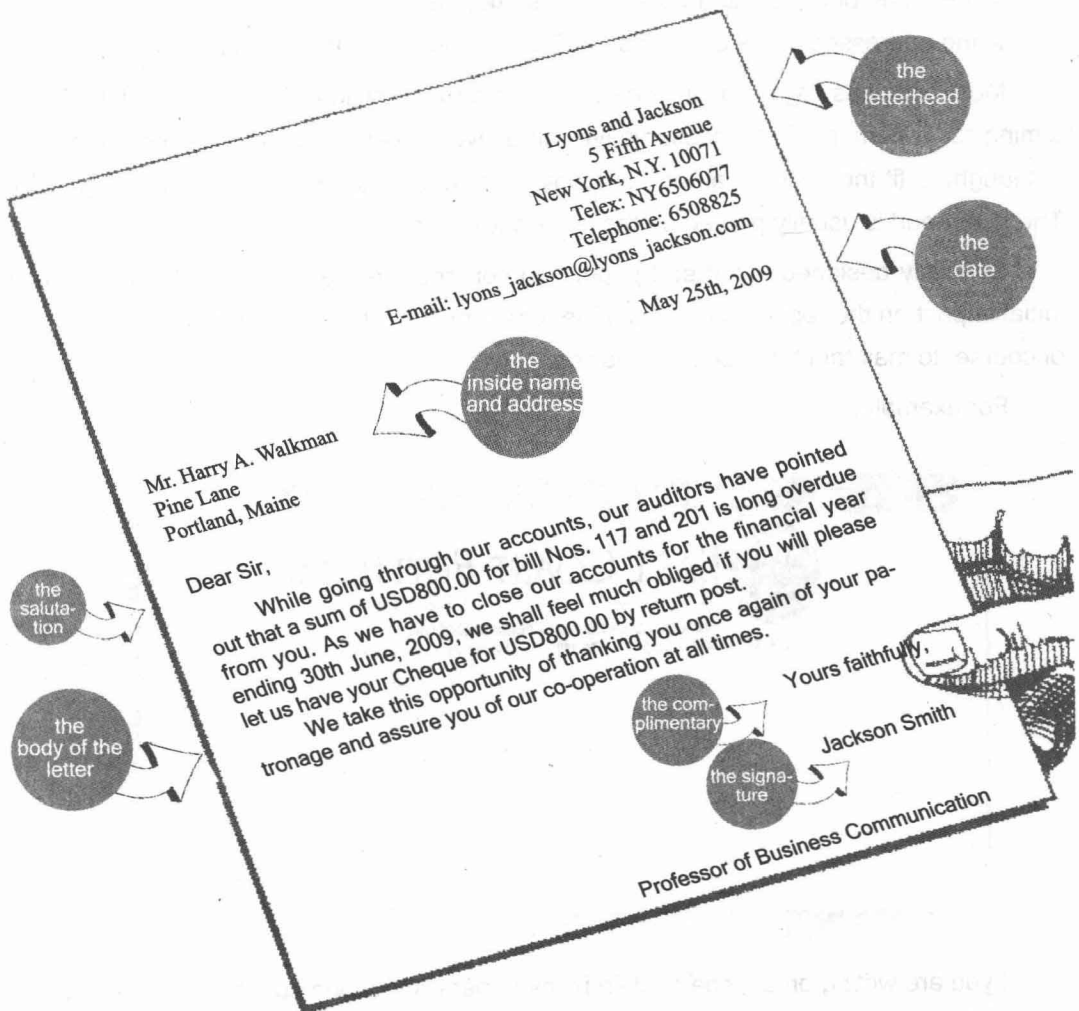
The basics of good business letter writing are easy to learn. The following guide provides the phrases that are usually found in any standard business letters. These phrases are used as a kind of frame and introduction to the content of business letters. By using these standard phrases, you can give a professional tone to your English business

letters.

The Main Parts of Business Letters

In modern international business letter writing, formality is rapidly giving way to a less conventional and friendlier style, but the mechanical structure of a letter still follows a more or less set pattern determined by custom and not resulting from any deliberate plan.

A business letter is usually composed of seven parts: the letterhead, the date, the inside name and address, the salutation, the body of the letter, the complimentary close and the signature.



The Letterhead

The first and most obvious part of a company's business letter is its letterhead. The role of a letterhead is to identify where the letter comes from.

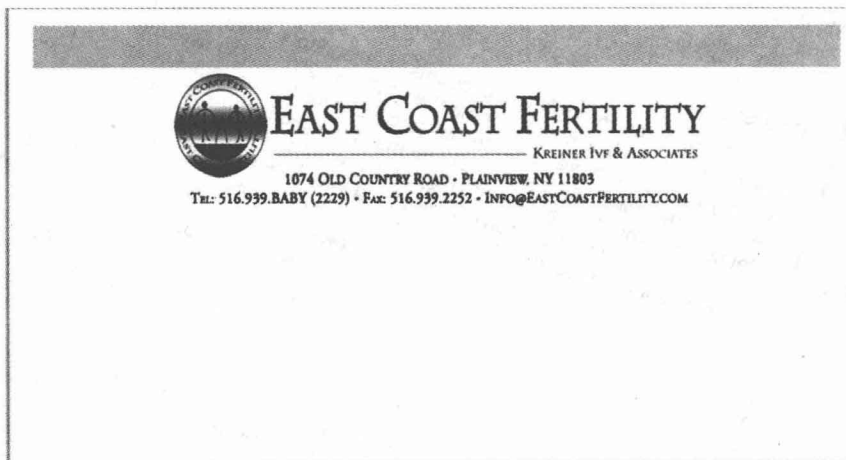
The letterhead contains the following:

- ✓ the name of the sender;
- ✓ the address of the sender;
- ✓ the telephone number (fax number, E-mail address, etc.) of the firm;
- ✓ the firm's number at the commercial register;
- ✓ the emblem or trade mark of the firm (sometimes);
- ✓ the name of the directors of the firm (sometimes);
- ✓ the addresses of the branches or offices of the firm, if the sender has.

Most business organizations select their letterhead style carefully, often deliberately aiming for a certain effect (conservative, attractive, adventurous, understated, etc.) that is thought to fit the image that the company is attempting to project its corporate identity. The letterhead is usually printed on the letter paper used in the firm.

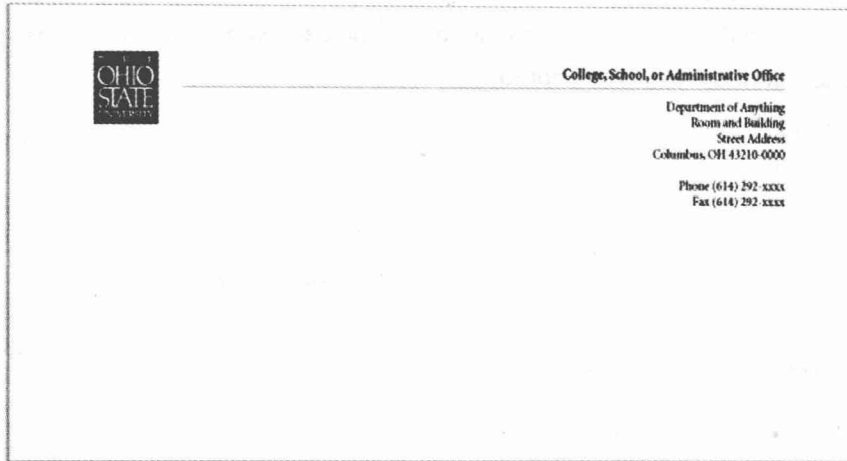
Specially designed letterhead paper can contribute a great deal to business letter's initial impact on the receiver. It can set the tone for what follows. It is then up to the writer, of course, to maintain that good impression.

For example,



If you are writing on a piece of plain blank paper without printed letterhead, you should type the letterhead on the right corner of the paper with a double space over the date line.

For example,



OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY

College, School, or Administrative Office

Department of Anything
Room and Building
Street Address
Columbus, OH 43210-0000

Phone (614) 292-xxxx
Fax (614) 292-xxxx

The Date

The date is considered as a vital part of any business letter. It must never be omitted because it plays a role of evidence of an arrangement or contract in case of dispute in courts of law.

Because the date is the only part that the typist needs to supply, its placement is always determined by the style of the letterhead. The date should be placed double spaces below the letterhead to the right for indented style and to the left for block style.

The date should be typed in full and not abbreviated (e.g. *December* for *Dec.*) and there is a growing tendency to omit the *-st*, *-nd*, *-rd* and *-th* that follow the day (e.g. *2 June* for *2nd June*).

The recommended forms for date are as follows:

7 July, 2010 (British) or *July 7, 2010* (American)



Note

Avoid giving the date in figures, for the practice to write date varies in different countries. English style follows the order of day, month and year while the US month, day and year. For example, *2/3/2010* could be taken as either *February 3* or *March 2*.

The Inside Name and Address

The inside address contains the mailing information belonging to the recipient and should be justified to the left margin of the letter and placed two spaces below the date (for very short letters four spaces is acceptable).

For example,

	The Richard H. Verrill Corporation New York 10202, N.Y. 954 Pelham Avenue, USA August 29, 2010
Mr. William Smith Thompson Vice-president, Consumer Affairs The Successful Business, Inc. Dear Sir,	

As in the heading, the inside address includes the street, city, state and zip code of the recipient, all of which should be placed below the name of the business or organization to whom the letter is being written. Identifying words such as Avenue, Circle, Court, Drive, and Street should be spelled out rather than abbreviated.

When the recipient's name, title and position are known, they should be included as the first two lines in the inside address and placed directly above the name of the business or organization.

For example,

✓ Ordinary men and women

Mr. Babara Evans
Mrs. June Smith
Miss Nana Wang
Ms. Serena Liu

✓ Men with titles or degrees

Sir John Smith (Not Sir J. Smith or Sir Smith)
Dr. B. Brian or Bruce Brian
Professor Martin Hastings
(Other titles are Colonel, Reverend, etc.)

- ✓ Two or more men
Messrs. Macdonald & Evans
- ✓ Unmarried women
Miss Elizabeth Wimpole
Miss E. Wimpole
Miss Judith Chen
- ✓ Married women
Mrs. Susannah Smith
Mrs. Nana Chou
- ✓ Women whose marital status is unknown
Ms. Merry Lawrence
Ms. D. Keyworth
Omission of the title



Note

“Messrs” is used only for partnerships whose firm name includes a personal element. It is not used for partnerships when there is no personal element in the name (e.g. Utility Furniture Co.); when the name already carries a courtesy title (e.g. Sir William Dobson & Sons); when the word “the” forms part of the company’s name (e.g. The Garrison Electrical Co.).

Neither is it used for the limited companies and other corporate bodies, which should always be addressed through an official (e.g. The Secretary, H. Slater & Co. Ltd.; The Treasurer, City of Manchester).

When the letter is written to someone in his official capacity, the position can be typed after the name with a comma being inserted between the name and the position.

For example,

- ✓ Mr. Bruce L. Zhang, the manager
- ✓ Miss Louis Laura, the secretary

When the name of the reader holding a position is unknown, the following forms will be helpful.

For example,

- ✓ The Managing Director
- ✓ The Sales Manager
- ✓ The Manager
- ✓ The Secretary

The Salutation

The salutation is the customary greeting in every letter. It is placed three typing spaces below the last line of the inside address and typed flush with the left margin.

Although business letter tends to be friendlier than conventional one, it is always formal comparing with ordinary personal letter. If you are writing to an individual you know by name, the most appropriate salutation is to use the individual's name, e.g. "Dear Mr. Stuart". If you are writing to one you know by name but not by sex, your salutation would be, for instance, "Dear A. K. Clancy". If the receiver's name and sex were unknown, "Dear Madam or Sir" would be a preferable salutation. But the Americans usually use "Gentlemen" instead of "Dear Sirs". Avoid using "Sirs" alone and "Gentlemen" in singular form. Never write "Dear Miss" or "Dear Mrs.".



Note



Dear Sir(s)
Dear Mr. Johnson
Dear Miss Gibbs
Dear Mrs. Graph
Dear Andy
Gentlemen
Dear Madam
Dear Mesdames



Dear Madame Liu
Dear Sir Johnson
Sirs
Dear Miss
Dear Mrs.
Gentleman

The Body of the Letter

The most important part of any business letter is the body of the letter, which contains the message from the writer to the addressee. You may observe all the correct forms for writing business letters but if the body of letter is so poorly written or so poorly organized that it does not accomplish its purpose, the letter is a failure.

The body is where you write the content of the letter; the paragraphs should be single spaced with a skipped line between each paragraph. Skip a line between the end of the body and the closing.

Your letter body should start with a general introduction of whom you are and the purpose of the letter. Include specific paragraphs, outline the issue or problem. Close the body with a call to action. Every business letter should be short and concise, for your reader's limited time should be taken into account.

The body of the letter customarily consists of three paragraphs.

First paragraph

In most types of business letter, it is common to use a friendly greeting in the first sentence of the letter. Here are some examples:

例 I hope you are enjoying a fine summer.

Thank you for your kind letter of January 5th.

I came across an ad for your company in *The Star* today.

It was a pleasure meeting you at the conference this month.

I appreciate your patience in waiting for a response.

After your short opening, state the main point of your letter in one or two sentences:

例 I'm writing to enquire about...

I'm interested in the job posted on your company website.

We'd like to invite you to a member for luncheon on April 5th.

Second and third paragraphs

Use a few short paragraphs to go into greater detail about your main point. If one paragraph is all you need, don't write an extra paragraph just to make your letter look longer. If you are including sensitive material, such as rejecting an offer or informing an employee of a layoff period, embed this sentence in the second paragraph rather than opening with it. Here are some common ways to express unpleasant facts:

例 We regret to inform you...

It is with great sadness that we...

After careful consideration we have decided...

Final paragraph

Your last paragraph should include requests, reminders, and notes in enclosures. If necessary, your contact information should also be in this paragraph. Here are some common phrases used when closing a business letter:

例 I look forward to...

Please respond at your earliest convenience.

I should also remind you that the next board meeting is on February 5th.

For further details...

If you require more information...

Thank you for taking this into consideration.

I appreciate any feedback you may have.

Enclosed you will find...

Feel free to contact me by phone or E-mail.

For example,

Pustin & Smith
Greenlife House
88 Cleenstan Street
Nairobi

18th June, 2009

Mr. S. Johnson
Marketing Manager
Philips & Henderson Ltd.
Lincoln House
146/152 Dean Street
Westbury-on-Thames
England

Dear Sir,

We thank you for your letter of 15th May, in which you offered us the Kenya agency for your office furniture. (*An acknowledgement of the previous correspondence*)

We should be pleased to represent you here, and have pleasure in enclosing a short account of our activities, together with the name of three companies with whom we have had dealings for a number of years. (*Discussion of matters*)

We look forward to receiving the draft agreement setting out the terms and conditions of the above agency. (*Hope*)

Yours faithfully,

Adolf Pustin

The Complimentary Close

The two shortest, simplest components of any business letter are the salutation and the close. It won't take you long to write either of these, but it's important to slow down enough to do them correctly. Readers will hardly notice a good salutation; the same applies to a good closing. By contrast, a poor salutation can bring a reader up short and a bad closing can undo all the hard work you invested in a great business letter.

Why do we need a closing line in a business letter or E-mail?

- ✓ to make a reference to a future event
- ✓ to repeat an apology
- ✓ to offer help

The complimentary close is always placed a double space below the body of the letter, preferably aligning with the date line or conforming to the style of the letter used.

If you're sending the business letter by E-mail, eliminate the spaces for your signature and move your name into the line directly below the closing. In both



E-mail and paper formats, make sure that your contact information appears prominently either on your stationery or in your E-mail signature.

For a normal business letter format, we prefer to use *Regards*, *Yours faithfully* and *Sincerely yours*. Other acceptable formal business letter close includes *Cordially*, *Cordially yours*, *Very sincerely yours*, *Very cordially yours*, *Yours very truly*, *Very truly yours* and if the person is of high stature, *Respectfully yours*.

When is "Yours faithfully" or "Yours sincerely" used in a business letter?

When the recipient's name is unknown to you:

例 Dear Sir,

...

Yours faithfully

Dear Madam,

...

Yours faithfully

Dear Sir or Madam,

...

Yours faithfully

When you know the recipient's name:

例 Dear Mr. Hanson,

...

Yours sincerely

Dear Mrs. Hanson,

...

Yours sincerely

Dear Miss Hanson,

...

Yours sincerely

Dear Ms Hanson,

...

Yours sincerely