



高职高专**商务英语**专业教材

Business English Correspondence

商务英语函电

刘玉玲 张 怡 房玉靖 主 编
刘晓丽 副主编



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清华大学出版社

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清华大学出版社

北 京



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前 言

随着经济全球化进程的不断加速，中国在国际经济中的地位日益提高，与世界各国间的经济、贸易活动愈加频繁，对外经济贸易事业得到了空前的发展。面对这一形势，我国将需要越来越多既懂经济贸易又精通专业英语的复合型人才。因此，我们编写了《商务英语函电》，以适应高职高专人才培养目标对外经贸人才的需求。

本书遵循实用性、可操作性的原则，结合外经贸工作的行业特点和专业英语学习需要，在选材上注重前瞻性，着眼于行业新理念、新方法、新术语的导入，在编写内容上注重系统性、科学性及广泛性。各个单元的独特设计使不同程度的学习者都能学有所获。书中涵盖国际贸易实际操作中各个环节的信函写作，力求教学内容与外经贸行业的职业能力要求相一致，与职业标准相衔接。在内容安排上，突出了“能力培养”和“创新教育”，除了系统的知识介绍外，加入了大量的常用专业术语和功能性句型，同时加大了技能训练的比重。通过学习和实训，有助于学生掌握各类外经贸信函的基本内容及写作技巧，能独立运用商务信函的词汇及固定句型，熟练撰写函件。本教材采用模块教学，按照实际工作流程，共分 16 个模块，首先简要介绍外贸信函和电子邮件的基本要素、格式和写作技巧，然后针对外经贸进出口流程的主要环节进行介绍，包括建立业务关系、资信查询、促销、询盘、报价、发盘与还盘、接受与订货、支付、包装、装运、成交、保险、索赔与理赔及代理等内容。

每个教学模块包括：学习目标、背景知识介绍、写作技巧、信函实例、注释、贸易术语、功能句型及课后练习，其中练习由基础训练和拓展训练两部分组成，使学生能够在巩固基本语言运用和表达的基础上进行信函翻译和撰写，循序渐进地掌握各类商务信函的写作技能，培养并提高学生使用专业英语进行交际的实际能力，本书最后的总复习部分附有大量的基础题练习，供学生进行基本功训练。

本教材作为“全国高职高专专业外语规划教材”之一，是适用于高职高专商务英语、国际贸易、国际商务等专业学生使用的专业英语教材，也可供从事外经贸和国际商务工作的人员参考使用。

本书无论从体例安排到内容设置，从知识点的归纳到教法的运用，都进行了大胆探索和尝试，欲为外经贸高等职业教育教材的编写与探索尽微薄之力。本教材的编写人员既有多年从事商务英语教学从而积累了丰富的教学资源的教授，也有来自企业一线从事外经贸工作的双师型教师。本教材由房玉靖担任主编，编写人员有房玉靖、刘玉玲、张怡和刘晓



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Module 1

Fundamentals of English Business Letter-Writing

Learning Objectives

Following are the goals for this module. Read them and consider your personal goals.

1. To learn basic principles of effective business letter-writing.
2. To learn the formats and structure of business letters, envelopes and E-mails.
3. To know the designing of an elegant and standardized letter or E-mail.
4. To master the correct arrangement of various parts of a business letter.
5. To practise writing business letters, E-mails and envelopes.

I. Formats of Business Letters

A letter that is neat, easy to read and presents a professional image will leave a good impression on your reader. When writing business letters, you must pay special attention to the format used. Keep in mind that different organizations have different format requirements for their professional communication.

Indented Format Following traditional British practice, the indented format takes in five or six spaces in the first line of each paragraph in the body of the letter, though deeper indentations than these are sometimes preferred. However, Consistency in use is, the important point.

Blocked Format Blocked Format is the easiest style to use because every letter begins at the left margin. Because of this, it's also one of the most widely used styles. However, in some



cases, blocked format can give the letter a left-heavy appearance. You may want to avoid this minor flaw by using modified blocked format.

Modified Blocked Format The modified blocked format uses the basic blocked format. However, the following parts of the letter begin at the horizontal center of the page: the return address, the date, the complimentary close, the signature, the sender's typed name, and the sender's official title. Using the center at a left margin for these elements gives the letter a more balanced look. Writers can also use blocked paragraphs, as in blocked format ted-letters.

II. Principles of Business Letter-Writing

Clearness In order to achieve clearness, you should not convey more than one idea in a sentence. You'd better not introduce more than one topic in a paragraph and not deal with more than one matter in a letter.

Conciseness Try to make your message brief and straight to the point. Avoid using long words or sentences. Use daily expressions to replace jargons. Express yourself in an orderly and logical way. A good business letter should be natural, human and easy to read.

Correctness You have to make sure that both the language and facts are correct. In terms of language, you should make sure that you make no grammatical mistakes. Pay attention to punctuation for it will effect the meaning of the sentence.

Courtesy This is more than politeness. A good business letter should be positive, friendly and sincere.

III. Structure of Business Letters

A well-constructed business letter in English is usually made up of seven essential parts and some miscellaneous parts.

I. The Essential Parts of a Business Letter

A business letter can be made of sevenessential parts: the letterhead. the date. the inside name and address. the salutation. the body of the letter. the complementary close. the signature.

1) The Letterhead (信头)

The letterhead includes the essential particulars about the writer - name, postal address, post code, telephone number, fax number, E-mail address, etc.. Usually big firms engage experts to design their attractive letter paper, with their well-balanced letterheads, sometimes even with



trademarks pre-printed on it in order to strengthen their firms' impression and enhance their firms' prestige. The best way is to print the letterhead in the up-center, because the letterhead printed in the up-center will offer a well balanced appearance which will show a very smart and wonderful design of the letterhead.

2) The Date (日期)

The date line is used to indicate the date the letter was written. Some offices show the standard date line near the body of the letter, ending at the right margin two spaces above the name of the addressee, which is written flush with the left margin. If the centered date line is chosen, it is placed two spaces below the letterhead as though it's part of the letterhead and centered exactly.

In typing the date line, never abbreviate the name of the month or use figures for it. To give the date in figures (e.g. 12/10/2008) is in bad taste, and it may easily cause confusion because in Britain this date would mean 12 October, 2008, but in the United States and some other countries it would mean 10 December, 2008. Also, use numerals only for the day of the month. you needn't add **nd**, **d**, **rd**, **st**, or **th**. These sounds are heard but are not written. For example We use May 5, 2009 instead of May 5, 2009, and June 2, 2009 instead of June 2, 2009.

3) The Inside Name and Address (封内名称及地址)

Although it may seem unnecessary to include the addressee's name and address on the letter, it is appropriate and necessary to do so because they serve as a future reference on the copy the sender keeps.

The inside name and address includes addressee's title and full name, business title, business name, and full address.

It is the usual practice to type the inside name and address in blocked paragraph form at the left-hand margin of the letter no matter which style you are using. This helps to give the letter a tidy appearance.

Mr., Mrs., Miss., Ms., and Messrs, are the ordinary courtesy titles used for addressing correspondents.

4) The Salutation (称呼)

The salutation is the friendly greeting that precedes the body of the letter. The particular form used depends upon the writer's relationship with his correspondent. To some extent, it settles the form of the complimentary close. the two must always be in keeping.

For ordinary business purposes, Dear Sir (or Dear Madam for both single and married women) is used for addressing one person, and Dear Sirs or Gentlemen (or Mesdames) for addressing two or more, as where a letter is addressed to a firm. Note that Gentlemen is the American, and Dear Sirs is the British way of opening a letter to a company when you write to a firm, not to a particular person.



The salutation always appears on a line by itself, conventionally three line-spacing below the inside name and address, and followed by a comma for Dear Sirs and a colon for Gentlemen.

The salutation usually matches the complimentary close.

5) The Body of the Letter (信文)

The body of the letter is the most important part in a business letter, which carries the actual message you are sending.

Before you begin to write, you must consider the following two points at first:

- ◇ What is your aim to write this letter?
- ◇ What is the best way to go about it?

Since the main purpose of the letter is to convey a message, the letter should be written in language that is easily understood. The following serves as reminders:

- ◇ Write simply, clearly, courteously, grammatically, and to the point.
- ◇ Paragraph correctly, confining each paragraph to one topic.
- ◇ Avoid stereotyped phrases and commercial jargon.

6) The Complimentary Close (结尾敬语)

The complimentary close, like the salutation, is purely a matter of convention and a polite way of ending a letter. The expression used must be appropriate to the occasion and be in keeping with the salutation.

The following are the usual matches used in modern business letters:

<u>Salutation</u>	<u>Close</u>	<u>Occasion</u>
Dear Sir(s)	Yours faithfully	standard and formal closure for business letters
Dear Madam	Yours faithfully	standard and formal closure for business letters
Gentlemen	Yours truly	used by Americans
Dear Mr. Smith	Yours sincerely	used less formally and between persons known to each other

The complimentary close appears two lines below the last line of the message. Either left justified or five spaces to the right of center. The complimentary close must never be separated from the substance of a letter by being carried to a separate sheet. Line spacing or word spacing should be re-arranged on the computer to keep it on the same sheet with the body of the letter or carry some parts of the letter to the next sheet. When using continuation sheets, always type a heading to show:

- ◇ the number of the sheet (in the upper center of the page).
- ◇ the name of your correspondent (on the left-hand side).
- ◇ the date of the letter (on the right-hand side).



For example:

-2-	
ABC Trading Co. Ltd.	5 March, 2008

7) The Signature (签名)

The signature is the signed name or mark of the person writing the letter or that of the firm he or she represents. It is written in ink immediately below the complimentary close. Because a signature is the distinguishing mark of the one who uses it, the same style must always be adopted.

The signature as written and the signature as typed must correspond exactly.

2. The Miscellaneous Parts of a Business Letter

the other parts should be: the reference, the attention line, the subject line, the reference notation, the enclosure, the carbon copy, the postscript.

1) The Reference (案号)

Most letter-heads provide for reference letters and numbers. When one firm writes to another, each will give a reference, which is marked “Our ref:” or “Your ref:” to avoid confusion.

2) The Attention Line (注意事项)

The phrase “For the attention of ...” or simply “Attention” is used where the writer of a letter addressed to an organization wishes to direct it to a particular official or department in charge of the situation covered. It is typed two line-spacing above the salutation, underlined and, except with the fully-blocked letter-style, centered over the body of the letter, For example:

For the attention of Mr. John Smith

or: Attention: Mr. John Smith

3) The Subject Line (事由)

The subject line gives an overview of what the letter is about. The subject line of a letter is an informal way of categorizing or titling a letter. Many letters in business begin with a subject line after the salutation, a valuable aid in the distribution of mail that also facilitates filing. The subject line can be centered, but when the paragraphs are blocked, it is flush with the left margin. The short form “Re:” may precede the subject matter.

The heading belongs to the letter and is also typed two line-spacing below the salutation, underlined and, except with the fully-blocked letter-style, centered over the body of the letter.



4) The Reference Notation (经办人代号)

This notation is typed two spaces below the typed signature, and shows only the initials of the typist. If the dictator's name is not typed in the signature area, the reference notation shows the initials of both the dictator and the typist. MB/DS --- (Mary Brown/David Smith) are acceptable forms of reference notations.

5) The Enclosure (附件)

When there is something enclosed with the letter, type the "Enclosure" or an abbreviation of it in the bottom of left-hand. Two-line spacing below the Reference Notation the writer may indicate one or more enclosures in the letter by following any of the following examples:

Enclosure: Price list

Enclosures

Enclosures 4

Encl. As stated

Encl.

6) The Carbon Copy Notation (抄送)

There are two types of carbon copy notations. The first is indicated by "cc" followed by the names of the persons who will receive copies of the letters. This notation is typed on the original and carbon copies.

The second type of copy notation is specified on the copy only by the abbreviation "bcc" (blind carbon copy) and the recipient's name. No one other than the recipient of the "bcc" and you will know he has received a copy of the letter.

Here are the examples:

cc Shanghai Branch Office

bcc Mr. Jones, the sales manager

7) The Postscript (附言)

If the writer wishes to add something he forgot to mention or emphasize, he may type his after-thought two spaces below the carbon copy notation. The adding of a "P. S." should, however, be avoided as far as possible, since it is usually a sign of poor planning.

Here's an example:

P. S. I, on behalf of my company, sincerely invite you to attend the Trade Fair which will be held in our city next month.