



新基点(New Benchmark)全国高职高专院校商务英语系列规划教材

NEW BENCHMARK

商务英语写作

Business Writing in English

郑卫 汪文格 主编



对外经济贸易大学出版社

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Shangwu Yingyu Xiezuo

商务英语写作



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郑 卫 汪文格 主编

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出版说明

“新基点 (New Benchmark) 全国高职高专院校商务英语系列规划教材”是对外经济贸易大学出版社联合全国重点职业学院的骨干教师推出的一套全新的商务英语系列教材。本套教材适用于全国高职高专院校英语专业商务/应用/外贸英语方向以及财经类专业的学生。

目前高职教育提出了“工学结合、项目为中心、案例驱动教学、边讲边练”为核心的理念。本套教材就是贯彻这个理念,着眼于提高学生实际操作能力和就业能力的目的,采取了模块化、多案例、互动式、重实训的编写方式,让学生在理论够用的基础上,在实训环节上有所突破。

我国高职高专教育的培养目标是以能力培养和技术应用为本位,其基础理论教学以应用为目的、够用为尺度、就业为导向;教材强调应用性和适用性,符合高职高专教育的特点,既能满足学科教育又能满足职业资格教育的“双证书”(毕业证和技术等级证)教学的需要。本套教材编写始终贯彻商务英语教学的基本思路:将英语听说读写译技能与商务知识有机融合,使学生在提高英语语言技能的同时了解有关商务知识,造就学生“两条腿走路”的本领,培养以商务知识为底蕴、语言技能为依托的新时代复合型、实用型人才。

本套教材包括《商务英语综合教程》(1-4册)、《商务英语听说》(1-2册)、《商务英语口语》(1-2册)、《国际商务报刊选读》、《商务英语写作》、《商务英语翻译》、《国际商务函电》、《国际商务谈判》、《国际商务制单》、《国际商务英语模拟实训教程》、《商务礼仪》、《英语应用文》、《跨文化交际》、《英美概况》、《旅游英语》、《酒店英语》、《物流英语》、《财经英语》、《文秘英语》、《会计英语》、《餐饮与服务英语》、《劳动与社会保障英语》等。本套教材不是封闭的,而是随着教学模式、课程设置和课时的变化,不断推陈出新。

本套教材的作者不仅具有丰富的商务英语教学经验,而且具有本专业中级以上职称、企业第一线工作经历、主持或参与过多项应用技术研究。这是本套教材编写质量的重要保证。

此外,本套教材配有教师用书或课件等立体化教学资源,供教师教学参考(见书末赠送课件说明)。

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前 言

随着我国经济建设的蓬勃发展,我国企业业务日益国际化,社会对既懂英语,又有国际商务知识和技能的国际商务人才的需求非常旺盛。在此背景下,国内英语教育也发生了巨大的变化,其职业性、实践性的特征越来越突出。商务英语专业是一个综合性、应用型的专业,商务英语专业人才培养目标是培养英语语言知识与国际商务知识相结合,英语语言能力与国际商务操作能力相结合的复合型人才。商务英语写作这门课程是商务英语专业中实践性很强的一门课。

本书的特点具有很强的针对性、实用性。编写的过程中,作者以实用、实训为导向,辅以理论要点的精炼讲解,并安排了大量实践性的训练任务,并提供参考答案和教学课件。在内容安排上,本书系统地介绍了商务信函的撰写,包括备忘录和便条、电子邮件和传真、通知、销售信、感谢信、抱怨信、邀请信、祝贺信、道歉信、慰问信、申请函、简历、会议日程、会议记录、商务报告、图表、以及外贸函电。全书共分二十个单元,每个单元第一部分 Introduction (概述),简述了该信函的主要特点、应用环境和目的;第二部分为 Sample Study (样例分析),向学习者展示了该种信函中针对某些常见交际目的、或者交际环境的典型信函,作为教学剖析的材料、学习者写作的范例;第三部分为 Guidelines for Writing (写作指南),为该种信函的写作提供了一些具体的指导性的原则;第四部分为 Useful Expressions (常用句型),为学习者提供了该种信函中常用的典型句子;第五部分为 Language Practice (语言练习),包括选择填空、改写练习、信函重构以及句子翻译等,这些练习对学习者的语言能力进行了训练,为下一步整篇信函的写作打下基础;第六部分为 Writing Tasks (写作练习),安排了与真实、典型的国际商务业务紧密结合的写作任务,旨在培养学习者的国际商务交际能力。本书可以作为商务英语专业本科、专科教材,同时对于外经贸业务人员也有较强的实用价值。

本书由广州航海高等专科学校外语系郑卫和深圳职业技术学院应用外国语学院汪文格两位老师编写。本书在编写过程中,参考了国内外一些有关的教材、书籍,同时得到对外经贸大学出版社领导的大力协作和支持,广州航海高等专科学校外语系以及深圳职业技术学院应用外国语学院领导也给予了积极的鼓励和支持,在此一并表示衷心的感谢。

由于作者水平有限,书中缺点错误在所难免,恳请同行专家以及广大读者批评指正。

编 者

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Unit 1

An Overview of Business Writing

Introduction

In today's highly developed and toughly competitive society, communication between individuals and groups is becoming increasingly frequent and important. It serves to pass on information, to express ideas or to exchange feelings.

Generally speaking, the function of a business letter is to get or to convey business information; to make or to accept an offer; to deal with various business. Nowadays a great deal of business is transacted in writing. Therefore, the ability to write effectively is a valuable business asset. Moreover, effective business writers can use their skill to help increase their company's sales and profits by promoting good relations with customers, employees, and the general public.

The Structure and Layout of Business Letters

Why is it important to use the correct business letter format? Because the way a business letter looks immediately gives the readers their first impression even before they read it. The quality of the paper, letterhead design, the margins, spacing and more all have something to say about the organization. A weakness in any of these elements can detract from the effectiveness of the message, even though it is expertly written.

1. The Structure of Business Letters

Broadly speaking, a business letter consists of the following twelve parts:

- 1) Letterhead and Date
- 2) Reference
- 3) Inside Address
- 4) Attention Line
- 5) Salutation
- 6) Subject Line
- 7) Body of the Letter
- 8) Complimentary Close

- 9) Signature
- 10) Enclosures
- 11) Carbon Copy
- 12) Postscript

1) Letterhead and Date

A business letter is usually typed on printed letterhead paper. A printed letterhead generally includes the following information:

The name of the writer's firm

Its address and postcode

Telephone number

Telex number

Fax number

Telegraphic address

The printed letterhead is usually artistically designed and printed in the center or on the left margin at the top of the page.

For example:

<p style="text-align: center;">Shenzhen Norinco Industries Co. LTD</p> <p>Shenzhen International Science & Tech Building Shennan ZhongLu Shenzhen 518000, China</p> <p>Tel: 0755 - 82684402 Fax: 0755 - 82860450 E-mail: wanlan@sz.norinco.com.cn</p>

The date is typed a few lines below the last line of the letterhead. There are different ways of writing the date:

September 10, 2009 — American form

10 September, 2009 — British form

As the date is a vital part of a business letter, it should always be typed in full and not abbreviated so that confusion may not be caused.

2) Reference

The reference number is generally used as a useful indication for filing. It is often placed two lines below the letterhead. The reference may include a file number, departmental code or the initials of the signer followed by that of the typist of the letter. These are marked "Our ref:" and "Your ref:" to avoid confusion.

Your ref: 123 WG/ZW

Our ref: 123 LH/QW

3) Inside Address

The name and address of the receiver is typed at the left-hand margin at least two lines below the date. It appears exactly the same way as on the envelope in single spacing.

4) Attention Line

Attention line is used when the writer of a letter which is sent to an organization wishes to direct the letter to a specific individual or department of the firm. It is generally placed below the inside address.

For example:

Attention: The Marketing Manager

Attention: Mr. Paul Elmsa

5) Salutation

The salutation is the polite greeting with which the writer begins or opens his letter. Its particular form depends on the writer's relationship with the receiver. "Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam" is used for addressing one person in the formal greeting of a business letter; and "Dear Sirs", or "Dear Mesdames" is used for addressing two or more people. If you are not sure whether the receiver is a man or a woman, use the greeting "Dear Sir or Madam".

Salutation is usually typed two spaces below the inside address, and followed by a comma for "Dear Sir(s)", and a colon for "Gentlemen".

6) Subject Line

Subject line, often inserted between the salutation and the body of the letter, is actually the main idea of a letter. It is placed either at the left-hand margin or in the center, depending on which style you are using. It helps the reader to obtain the gist of the letter, and it is also useful as a guide for filing.

It may begin with or without "Re:" or "Subject". For example,

Re: Your L/C 368

Subject: Sewing Machines

Sewing Machines

7) Body of the Letter

Body of the letter is the main part of a letter. It expresses the writer's desires, opinions, purposes, etc. So it should be carefully planned and paragraphed, with the opening sentence referring to previous correspondence, the actual message of the letter and the closing sentence referring to your intentions, hopes or expectations concerned with your future actions or plans. When writing, the writer should pay attention to the following:

- Write simply, clearly, courteously, grammatically and to the point.

- Paragraph correctly with one topic in each paragraph.

Make sure that your typing is accurate and the display artistic, aiming at an attractive

and pleasing appearance for your letter.

8) Complimentary Close

The complimentary close is merely a polite way of ending a letter. It is placed two or four lines below the last line of the body of the letter. It should match the salutation. The most commonly used sets of salutation and complimentary close are:

Salutation	Close
Dear Sir(s) , Dear Madam,	Yours faithfully, (or Faithfully yours,) (Formal — very commonly used in Britain)
Gentlemen:	Truly yours, (or Yours truly,) (Formal — very commonly used in America)
Dear Mr. Smith, (:)	Yours sincerely, (or Sincerely yours,) (Less formal — used between persons known to each other)

9) Signature

All letters must be signed. Since hand-written signatures are illegible, a letter should be signed by hand and in ink, followed by the person's name typed and his job title or position.

Never sign a letter with a rubber stamp. It is a sort of discourtesy.

10) Enclosures

If such documents as catalogues, price lists, sample books, etc. are sent with a letter, it is necessary to add "Enclosure" or its abbreviation "Enc." or "Encl. ", two lines below the signature at the left margin or below the reference initials.

Enclosures: 4 samples

Encl. : 3 copies of catalogues

11) Carbon Copy

When copies of the letter are sent to others, type c. c. below any enclosure notation at the left margin. For example,

c. c. Guangzhou Branch Office

12) Postscript

In a business letter a postscript is used to draw the reader's attention to a point that the writer wishes to emphasize or something he forgets to mention. It should be placed two lines below the carbon copy notation and flushed with the left margin.

2. The Layout of Business Letters

In a business letter layout, there are three most popular layouts: full block style, indented style and modified block style.

1) Full Block Style

Every line in the full block style begins at the left margin.

<u>Letterhead and Date</u>
<u>Reference</u>
<u>Inside Address</u>
<u>Salutation</u>
<u>Subject Line</u>
<u>Body of the Letter</u>
<u>Complimentary Close</u>
<u>Signature</u>
<u>Enclosures</u>
<u>Carbon Copy</u>
<u>Postscript</u>

2) Indented Style

In the indented style, each new paragraph starts four or five spaces from the left-hand margin, while the complimentary close and signature are written on the right-hand side of the sheet.

<u>Letterhead</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>Inside Address</u>	
<u>Attention Line</u>	
<u>Salutation</u>	
<u>Body of the Letter</u>	

<hr/>	
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
<u>Enclosures</u>	<u>Complimentary Close</u> <u>Signature</u>

3) Modified Block Style

In this style, paragraphs are not indented. The “Date”, “Complimentary Close” and “Signature” are aligned slightly past the center of the page.

<u>Letterhead</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>Inside Address</u>	
<u>Attention Line</u>	
<u>Salutation</u>	
<u>Body of the Letter</u>	
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
	<u>Complimentary Close</u> <u>Signature</u>
<u>Enclosures</u>	

3. Envelope Addressing

The three requirements for envelope addressing are accuracy, legibility and good appearance. The sender's address should be placed at the left corner above the envelope, while the receiver's name and address should be typed about half way down the envelope.

The stamps should be placed in the upper right-hand corner, while the post notations such as “Registered”, “Confidential”, “Private”, etc. should be placed in the bottom left-hand corner.

<u>sender's name</u>	(stamp)
<u>sender's address</u>	
	<u>The receiver's name</u> <u>The receiver's address</u>
<u>Registered</u>	

Writing Principles of Business Letters

In writing business letters, we should always bear in mind the essential qualities, which can be summed up in the Seven C's principles: Courtesy, Consideration, Conciseness, Clarity, Completeness, Concreteness and Correctness.

1. Courtesy

Courtesy plays a considerate role in business letter writing. It may help to strengthen your present business relations and to establish new ones. Beautiful and courteous words do not necessarily mean courteous attitude. It comes from your genuine sincerity and respect for the others. To show courtesy, one should follow closely the following suggestions:

- 1) Treat the readers with respect, friendliness and sincerity;
- 2) Be tactful, thoughtful and appreciative;
- 3) Avoid irritating, offensive or belittling statements;
- 4) Answer letters promptly;
- 5) Adopt the right tone.

2. Consideration

Consideration is another rule of good business communication. A letter functions well if it can deeply impress or influence its readers. To gain a favourable impression, "You-attitude" is crucial in business writing, that is to say, keep the reader's request, desires, interest as well as his feelings in mind.

"You-attitude" is not so simple as only to use "you" instead of "I" or "we". It simply means that the writer should show respect for the reader's feelings and attitudes, and plan the best way to present the message for the reader to receive. "You-attitude" can help to avoid awkward situation, and promote cooperation between the trade parties.

3. Conciseness

Conciseness is often considered to be a very important writing principle because it enables to save both the writer's and the reader's time. Conciseness means to write in the fewest possible words without sacrificing completeness, concreteness and courtesy. To achieve conciseness, the writer should try to keep the sentences short, avoid unnecessary wordiness or repetition, and omit excessive details.

4. Clarity

Clarity tells the reader exactly what he or she wants and needs to know. Thus the writer must try to express his meaning clearly so that the reader will understand the letter well. To do so, try to use short familiar words and simple short sentences rather than long difficult words and complex long sentences. The writer should also avoid vague and ambiguous words and expressions.

5. Completeness

A successful business letter must include all the necessary information. Make sure that

the letter does not lack any relevant data which the reader wants to know. Incompleteness is not only impolite, but also leads to the reader's unfavourable impression on the writer's company.

One of the best ways to assure completeness is to write an outline. An outline helps for the letter to be full and complete. It may assure that all the matters are discussed and all the questions are answered.

6. Concreteness

A business letter should be specific, definite and vivid. It should avoid being too general, vague and abstract. Especially for letters calling for specific reply, such as making an offer, inquiring trade terms, etc, concreteness is always stressed.

7. Correctness

Business letters must be correct, otherwise they may be misunderstood. Correct grammar, punctuation and spelling are basic requirements for business writing. Moreover, correctness refers to the accurate use of the facts and figures, the correct level of language as well as the correct understanding of commercial jargons.

Language Practice

Practice 1 Arrange the following in proper form as they should be displayed in a business letter.

1. The sender's name: Guangdong International Trading Corp.
2. The sender's address: 108 Linhexi Road, Guangzhou, Guangdong, China
3. The sender's telephone number: 020 - 82386687
4. The sender's telex address: 3328 GZ CN
5. The sender's fax: 020 - 82381058
6. Date: September 18, 2009
7. The receiver's name: The ABC Trading Company
8. The receiver's address: 29 Fifth Avenue, London, U. K.
9. The salutation: Gentlemen;
10. Subject: Washing Machines
11. The message:

We thank you for your letter dated 8 September inquiring for the captioned goods.
Enclosed please find a copy of our latest catalogue and price list for your reference.
We await your early reply with keen interest.
12. The complimentary close: Yours truly,
13. The signature: John Smith

Practice 2 Address an envelope for the above letter.

Memos and Notes

Introduction

Memos

Memo is short for memorandum. It is used for short reminders, quick announcements or concise pieces of information. The primary purpose of the business memo is to allow timely communication to a large number of employees or other members of an organization. The business memo is generally used in place of a traditional letter for internal communication, though memos may be used to communicate with individuals from other organizations in some instances.

Memos are used for a wide variety of purposes. They may be used to convey information such as policy changes, promotions or other personnel changes, a project status update, or increased offering of products and services. They can also be used to request that employees attend a meeting or make changes to work procedures or practices, or they can address a problem, such as employee tardiness or absence, or provide feedback on a product or program.

Notes

A note, which is very common in office daily writing, is a piece of writing to call attention to something, or a short letter. A note can take different forms. Compared with a letter, a note is shorter, simpler in form and often informal or colloquial in language. In a note, the following may be omitted:

- the addresses of the addressee and the addresser
- the word "Dear" in the salutation
- the complementary close
- the year in date

People usually use notes when they have something to tell others, or ask others to do something for them but they can't afford a face-to-face talk, for example, "Asking for a sick leave", "Asking a friend to call" and "Note of thanks", etc. Usually people do not post a note, neither do they use an envelope. They usually ask someone else to send the note for them, or just write the note on a public message board.