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## PREFACE

随着经济全球化不断深化,对外贸易及商务迅猛发展,市场对国际贸易及商务的从业人员需求旺盛。为了迎接市场挑战,在国际贸易及商务领域占据优势,我们不仅需要掌握国际贸易知识及交流技能,还需要提高外贸英语写作沟通技能,才能事半功倍提高工作效率。这门课主要是培养涉外商务活动中的写作交际技能,如果没有大量亲身参与实践,这些技能是无法培养的。写作交际实践具有很强的灵活性、艺术性和权变性,这些是无法用传统说教方式再现的。本书的写作初衷就是提供给大家一部融知识性、实用性、实操性于一体的实用教材,涵盖国际贸易关键环节、书信特点、商业术语和外贸英语信例等,通过英汉双语加注、大量例句及练习,方便读者学习、巩固、提高外贸商务英语书信交流能力,为能胜任未来职场而装备自己。多年教学实践证明,本书既可以作为高校国际商贸相关专业的教材用书,也可以用于培训及自学。

为了培养涉外商务英语专业人才、国际贸易专业人才和国际商务专业人才,满足市场对其各个方面的需求,我们编写本书以培养学生通过外贸函电写作去处理实际商务问题的能力。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,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,并设置了许多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,满足时代对有效地从事国际经贸信息沟通专门人才的需求。

本书的编写是我们编委的又一次尝试,是在体现商务英语专业、国际贸易专业和国际商务专业这一职场大方向的职业教育要求中,为满足市场需求所做出的努力。本书的编写完全按照应用型本科院校商务英语专业人才、国际贸易专业人才和国际商务专业人才培养的目标建设运作,教材编写的理念、组织形式和运作方式等进行了一系列的更新和创新,以商务英语专业人才、国际贸易专业人才和国际商务专业人才的培养目标为基准,借鉴国内外的先进教学方法,结合教学实际,设计了系统的外贸函电写作实训体系,以情境教学引领、单元任务作为基本逻辑框架,将职场交际理念与语言综合训练结合,每个写作实训任务都采用了目前流行的、颇受学生欢迎的准环境下的仿真模拟训练。

本书内容对学生在商务环境下的职场交际能力和表达能力进行训练。书中附录包含大量的商务交际活动中的交际语言和词汇,可使学生的模拟仿真实训能力进一步提升。

本书强调外贸英语函电专业语言的使用和能力培养,突出实训,强调外贸函电写作专业知识和外贸语言的整体性及情境性,注重可操作性和模拟性。本书既可以作为独立的外贸英语函电写作实训教材使用,也可作为相关国际商务专业的配套教材作用,适合应用型本科院校和高职高专院校的学生学习,也适合所有想学习外贸英语函电写作的人群使用。

本书在编写过程中,参阅了目前已经出版的国内外优秀教材、专著和相关资料,引用了一些有关的内容和研究成果,恕不一一详尽说明,仅在参考文献中列出,在此向有关作者致以衷心的感谢!限于作者水平有限,书中难免有错误和不妥之处,敬请各位读者不吝赐教!

编 者



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## Project 1

# Basic Knowledge of Business English Letter Writing

### Learning Objectives

1. Know the basic knowledge of business English letter writing.
2. Master the writing principles of business letters.
3. Know the basic parts of business letters.
4. Be familiar with the formats of business letters and envelopes.

## Section 1

### Fundamentals of Business English Letters

Although many of business activities can be handled over the phone or in person, business letters remain an indispensable and essential part of business communication since they are one of the best ways to ensure the message received accurately. Business letters also play a very important role in the development of goodwill and friendly trade relationship. In writing a business letter, there are certain principles for the writer to follow, which are called “Seven C’s”. They are: Courtesy, Completeness, Conciseness, Clarity, Concreteness, Correctness and Consideration.

#### 1. Courtesy

Courtesy is not merely politeness, what’s more, true courtesy needs to use tactful and respectful expressions to show the honest attitude, thoughtful appreciation, sincere politeness, heartfelt respect and considerate understanding. It’s like a favorable introduction card, the courteous expression will make a good impression on the customers and make them feel comfortable, which may promote to establish a cooperative relationship with your customers.

Promptness is one of the most important things in being courteous. Punctuality will please your customers who hate waiting for a reply for days.

Avoid courtesy blunders in your letters. Discrepancy often occurs in business, but it

should be handled and settled with diplomacy and tact without ill will on both side. Never show your anger and impatience in a business letter, avoid suspicion, accusation and talking down. Never use irritating, offensive and belittling statements.

## 2.Completeness

Completeness means that all the facts that the receivers needs for the reaction you desire should be contained in your message. It is essential to check the message carefully before it is sent out to see that all the matters are discussed and all the questions are answered. Business letters should be avoid incompleteness.

## 3.Conciseness

Conciseness means saying things in the fewest words without sacrificing completeness and courtesy. In business correspondence, conciseness represents increased effectiveness and decreased costs. To achieve conciseness, try to avoid wordiness and redundancy and keep the sentences short. Generally, clearness and conciseness can be gained by writing short sentences rather than long ones. What's more, careful paragraphing can make a business letter easier to read; so, it is a good rule to confine each paragraph to only one point or topic.

## 4.Clarity

A business letter is effective only when it communicates the necessary ideas to its readers with clarity. The following guideline can be helpful for writing business letters clearly: use accurate, simple and straight-forward words; present data in tables or graphs; avoid ambiguity and use appropriate words in correct sentence structure to fully convey the message to your readers.

## 5.Concreteness

Concreteness means being specific, definite, and vivid rather than vague and general. Concreteness is always stressed, especially for letters calling for a specific reply, such as specifications and characters of goods, trade terms, figures and etc. So, you should use specific facts and figures, put action in verbs, and choose image-building words in business letter writing.

For example: "Please send your sample to us before September 12." is better than "Please send your sample to us as soon as possible."

## 6.Correctness

Business letters must be correct, otherwise they may cause great losses. Correctness refers not only to correct usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling, but also to appro-



priate tone and accuracy of information. Furthermore, we should neither overstate nor understate in business letters, because overstatement might throw you in an awkward position while understatement would lead to less confidence and hold up trade development.

### 7.Consideration

When writing a letter, keep the reader's request, desires, needs and feelings in mind, and try to put yourself in her or his position. Your letters should help to create a good impression and avoid leaving unfavorable impression or offending others. Try to give the consideration to the receivers' wishes, demands, interests and difficulties by adopting their viewpoint. Emphasize the "You-attitude" rather than the "We-attitude" in business correspondence, and you will find the best ways to express your better understandings and present the messages.

For example, "we-attitude": "We allow you 3% discount for cash payment"; and "you-attitude": "You earn 3% discount for cash payment".

## Section 2

### Layout of Business English Letters

There are seven basic parts in an ordinary business letter:

- (1) letterhead;
- (2) date;
- (3) inside name and address;
- (4) salutation;
- (5) the body of the letter;
- (6) complimentary close;
- (7) signature.

Some letters may contain one or more of the following, which depends on the different situation of each writing requirement:

- (1) reference number;
- (2) subject line;
- (3) reference notation;
- (4) enclosure notation;
- (5) carbon copy notation;

(6) postscript.

### 1. Letterhead (信头)

Letterheads usually include the essential information about the writer: name, address, zip-code, telephone number, telex number, and e-mail address, etc. The writing of the address should be stressed as it is totally different from Chinese ones. The number and the street should be put at the beginning while the city and country be put at the end. Usually, letterhead is printed in the up-center or at the left margin of a letter.

Blyco Textile Co.Ltd.  
P.O. Box 625, Lagos  
Nigeria  
Tel: 2341-2531457 Fax: 2341-3254767 E-mail: btcl@hotmail.com

### 2. Date (日期)

As for the date, it is usually put one or two lines under the letterhead on the right or the left margin for the purpose of filing or checking. The date should be written or typed in full, and it is usually showed in the order of month/day/year (America form), or day/month/year (British form). Simple ways of writing are: March 4, 2019/March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019/4<sup>th</sup> March, 2019/4 March, 2019. Avoid using “4/3/19” or “2019.3.4”.

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

The inside address consists of the name and address of the receiver. The preferred position for the inside address is the left margin at least one or two lines below the date.

If the receiver is a company, the inside address includes only the company name and the address. If it is to a person, use either a courtesy title (Mr., Mrs., Miss., or Ms.), or a professional title (Dr., or Prof.). The title of his or her position within the organization may be included either immediately after the person's name or on the line below the name. For example:

Ms Sarah Davis, Sales Manager  
TPT Machine Corp.  
362 Deeds Street  
Dover Ohio 99231  
U.S.A

Ms Sarah Davis  
Sales Manager  
TPT Machine Corp.  
362 Deeds Street  
Dover Ohio 99231  
U.S.A

If the letter is addresses to the company but directed to the attention of an individual, take the form of “ATTN” (attention; for the attention of). For example:

Grand Engineering Co.Ltd.  
126 Duke Street  
London N.W.2  
England  
ATTN: Mr. Tom Brown, General Manager

#### 4. Salutation (称呼)

The salutation is the complimentary greeting with which the writer opens his letter. The particular form used depends upon the writer's relationship with his correspondent. The customary formal greeting in a business letter is "Dear Sirs" "Dear Madams" "Dear Ms." "Gentlemen" or an official title like "President" or "Doctor", etc. If the writer is not sure whether the letter will be read by a man or a woman, "Dear Madam or Sir" can also be used. If the receiver is known to the writer personally, a less formal greeting is used: "Dear Mr...." "Dear Ms...." or "Dear Dr....".

The salutation always appears on a line by itself, conventionally one or two lines below the inside name and address, and followed by a comma or a colon.

#### 5. Body of the Letter (正文)

The body of a letter is the part in which the writer expresses his idea, opinion or requirements, etc. It begins one or two lines below the salutation (or the subject line), and it is usually divided into three parts: opening, body and closing. Opening is to give the reason of writing, body is to specify the writer's requirements and wishes while closing is to express thanks or hopes. It deserves special attention no matter how brief it may be.

It is advisable to bear the above-mentioned principles of "Seven C's" in mind when writing this part. Firstly, write clearly, simply, grammatically, courteously and to the point. Then, paragraph correctly, confining each paragraph into one topic. Lastly, make sure the typing is accurate and the display artistic. Lines within a paragraph should be single-spaced, with double-spacing between paragraphs, before and after the salutation, and before the complimentary close.

#### 6. Complimentary Close (结尾敬语)

The complimentary close is a polite way of ending a letter. It is placed two lines below the closing paragraph. The correct punctuation for it is a comma and only the initial letter in the first word is capitalized. There are many different complimentary closes that shows respect, but it should match the form of the salutation.

	Salutation	Complimentary Close
Formal	Dear Sir (s), Dear Madam (s), Gentlemen, To whom it may concern,	Yours faithfully, Faithfully yours, Yours truly, Truly yours, Yours respectfully,
Less formal	Dear Mr. Brown, Dear Ms. Judy, Dear Dr. Michael,	Yours sincerely, Sincerely yours, Cordially yours,
Informal	Dear Mary, Dear Joy,	Sincerely, Cordially, Best regards, Take care

### 7. Signature (签名)

The signature is the signed name or seal of the writer. It is generally put two lines below the complimentary close. It should be signed by hand and in ink. Unsigned letters have no authority and a signature in pencil or crayon is rude to the receiver of the letter. Under the handwritten signature, the signer's name and his or her position are usually typed, since many hand-written signatures are illegible.

Yours faithfully,

(signature)

Tom Brown

Sales manager

### Optional parts of a business letter:

#### 8. Reference Number (参考号)

The reference number enables replies to be linked with earlier correspondence and ensures that they reach the right person or department without delay. It may be an order number, a L/C number, a file number, an invoice number, or department code. "Re" or "Ref" is the most common abbreviations.

The reference is sometimes marked with "Our Ref." or "Your Ref." to avoid confusion.

It is often put, one or two lines below the letterhead, on the left margin.

### 9. Subject Line (事由/主题行)

The subject line is used to invite attention to the topic of the letter. It is often inserted between the salutation and the body of the letter, either beginning at the left margin or the center, depending on the style of the letter. It is normally headed by a word like “Sub” or “Re”. It may be typed either all in capital letters or in upper-and-lower-case letters and underlined. For example:

Re: Color TV  
Subject: Color TV  
Sub: DELAY OF DELIVERY

### 10. Reference Notation (经办人代号)

The reference notation is used to indicate the initials of the person who dictates the letter in uppercase characters and the initials of the person who types the letter in lowercase characters when the dictator's name is not typed in the signature area. These initials identify the writer and the typist of the letter. The following examples are acceptable forms of reference notations:

TB: sc      TB/sc

[ “TB” are the initials of Tony Brown (the dictator); “sc” are Sophia Clinton (the typist) ]

### 11. Enclosure Notation (附件)

The enclosure notation is used to remind that the necessary enclosures are attached with the letter and to alert the recipient to refer to the material. Such documents as catalogues, price lists, brochures, proforma invoices, copies of fax, order, etc., are often attached to the letter as enclosures. The marking may be in any of the following ways:

Enclosure: Price List  
Encl. 2 invoices  
Enc. 1 Catalogue  
Encls: as stated  
Attachments: Packing List  
Weight Memo

### 12. Carbon Copy Notation (抄送)

If the copies of the letter are sent to a third party, carbon copy needs to be used. It shows that the letter has been sent to someone relevant. It is usual to indicate this by typing

“CC” or “cc” followed by the name of the recipient of the copy. For example:

CC: John Anderson

cc: Mr. Wilson

### 13. Postscript (附言)

Generally, a postscript is used to emphasize a point to which the writer wants to draw the reader's attention. If the writer wishes to add further information, he or she may also type the after-thought as a postscript. Try to avoid the use of this kind of postscripts, since it may suggest the writer fails to plan his letter well before he writes it. Sometimes, the writer may put a handwritten postscript to the letter for the purpose of adding a personal touch to the typewritten letter. The word “Postscript” is always abbreviated as “PS” or “P.S.”. For example:

PS: Be sure to place your order soon.

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

## Section 3

### Formats of Business English Letters

Basically, there are three main patterns of layout for business letters; the indented form, the full block form and the modified block form.

#### 1. The Indented Form

1. Letterhead	
_____	
_____	
2. Reference Number	
	3. Date
4. Inside Name and Address	
_____	
_____	

5.Salutation

6.Subject Line

7.Body

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

8.Complimentary Close

9.Signature

10.Reference Notation

11.Enclose Notation

12.Carbon Copy Notation

13.Postscript

## 2.The Full Block Form

1.Letterhead

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2.Reference Number

3.Date

---

## 6. Subject Line

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

## 12. Carbon Copy Notation

## 13. Postscript

---



2. Reference Number

3. Date

4. Inside Name and Address

---

---

---

5. Salutation

6. Subject Line

7. Body

---

---

---

---

8. Complimentary Close

9. Signature

---

10. Reference Notation

11. Enclose Notation

12. Carbon Copy Notation

13. Postscript

## Section 4

### Envelop Addressing

Business envelopes ordinarily have the return address printed in the upper left corner. The receiver's name and address should be typed about half way down the envelope. The postmark or stamps should be placed in the up right-hand corner, while the bottom left-hand corner is for post notations such as "Confidential" "Secret" "Urgent" "Registered" "Via Air Mail", etc.

The following is a typical envelope.

Shanghai Foreign Trading Corp.	(Stamp)
212 Nanjing Road, Shanghai	
P.R. China	
200002	
	Overseas Trading Co.
	123 Market Street
	London, E.C. 3
	England
Registered	

## Section 5

### Practical Training

**Task 1.** Put the following from English into Chinese or vice versa.

- (1) courtesy;
- (2) inside name and address;
- (3) complimentary close;
- (4) signature;
- (5) conciseness;
- (6) carbon copy notation;
- (7) 完整;



实训答案

- (8) 清楚;
- (9) 附件;
- (10) 称呼;
- (11) 附言;
- (12) 具体。

**Task 2. Arrange the following information into a business letter of indented style.**

(1) Sender's name: Zhang Liang, from Grand Industrial Products Import & Export Corp.

(2) Sender's address: 32 Chunhui Road, Tianhe District, Gangzhou, 510507, China.

(3) Sender's telephone: 0086-020-85238880.

(4) Sender's fax number: 0086-020-85238881.

(5) Sender's e-mail address: gipre@163.com.

(6) Receiver's name: Wilson Company, Limited.

(7) Receiver's address: 212 Lombart Street, Lagos, Nigeria.

(8) Date: January 12, 2019.

(9) Subject: Sewing Machine.

(10) The message:

We thank you for your letter of January 8, 2019, enquiring for the captioned goods.

The enclosed booklet contains details of all our Sewing Machines and will enable you to make a suitable selection.

We look forward to receiving your specific enquiring with keen interest.

### Task 3. Address an envelope to the above letter.

## Section 6

### Supplement Knowledge

#### 外贸英语函电写作技巧

外贸英语函电具有语言规范化、内容简明化、态度礼貌化、格式规范化等特点。一方面，其用词、造句、语法、拼写和标点符号的使用要规范并合乎习惯，同时，其内容要生动、具体和明确，用尽可能少的文字完整、清楚地表达需要表明的意思，不能让收信人看后产生误解。另一方面，写信人应有理有节、注意礼貌，不能盛气凌人，要避免命令式和粗鲁的语气，同时也要做到不卑不亢、得体脱俗，既尊重国际贸易的习惯，又维护本国和公司的利益。此外，外贸函电具有其独特的格式、惯用的商务词汇及缩写、固定的句式，形成了独特的函电文体，具有强烈的商业色彩。其语言形式、语言规范等都必须为具体的业务服务，用词用语约定俗成，符合国际惯例，为世界各国商务人员所公认与接受。

我们在书写外贸英语函电时，一定要把握好外贸函电的特点规律，遵循外贸英语函电的写作原则，这样才能书写出有效的外贸英语函电，达到促进交易顺利进行的目的。

在外贸英语函电写作过程中，态度和语法是决定其是否成功的重要因素。在态度方面，要注意，除了要一直保持真诚、友善、自然之外，还要牢记五大要诀：

- (1) 迎合对方兴趣，兼顾彼此需要。
- (2) 强调正面要点，淡化负面影响。
- (3) 切勿言语讽刺，更忌颐指气使。
- (4) 倚重事实真相，力求冷静客观。

(5) 主题前后一致，莫因情绪扭曲。

语法和行文方面则要注意四大要点：

(1) 语气主动最自然，切莫消极又被动。

(2) 沉闷短语宜少用，免至迂腐且拘泥。

(3) 措辞古涩难沟通，行文浅白易答复。

(4) 要凭真意好发问，难却挚诚当回应。