

Unit One Basic Knowledge of Business Letter Writing



Brief Introduction ○ ○ ○

Business communication is generally regarded as the successful exchange of message that meets the goal of buying and selling commodities or other services. There are many types being used in communication, which include letters, telegrams, telexes, cables and electronic correspondence. But it is obvious that business letter is still the major carrier of business communication. So it is necessary for students of business communication to master some knowledge of business letter writing.

1. Components/Elements of Business Letters

There are various business letters and forms, but the basic components are the same. A standard business letter consists of the following seven essential parts: letterhead, date, inside address, salutation, body, complimentary close, signature.

1) Letterhead

Letterhead is the notable element of the business letters, which is usually in the middle, at the top of letter paper. It includes the essential particulars about the writer—the company's name, postal address and zip-code, telephone and facsimile number, web site and e-mail address. There are two kinds of layout of letterhead, which are “Block Form” and “Indented Form”. For example:

Block Form:

MINNESOTA MED—EQUIP Subsidiary of Minnesota Wire Cable Co.
376 Energy Park Drive St. Paul, MN 55168 USA
Telephone: (514) 732-1989
Fax: (514) 732-1992
Website: mm@mwccmme.com
E-mail: mmes@tom.com



Indented Form:

Guangzhou Textiles Imp & Exp Corporation
12/F Guangtex Building
458 Dong Feng Road
Guangzhou, 510030
The People's Republic of China
Tel: 83325688 Cable: 1129
Telex: 44452 GZTEX Fax: 83323688

↙ 2) Date

The date should be placed two or four spaces below the letterhead to the right for indented format style or semi-block style or the left for the blocked style. It should be written in full and not abbreviated. The preferred order of the parts that make up the date is, the day of the month, the month, the year. For example:

British English: 28th November, 2016; 28 November, 2016

American English: November 28th , 2016; November 28, 2016

↙ 3) Inside Address

The inside address consists of the correspondent's name and address. It appears exactly the same way as the envelope and should be placed two spaces below the date. Like the letterhead, the layout of inside address can also be divided into two styles: "Block Form" and "Indented Form". For example:

Block Form:

Mr. Paolo Follini
Purchasing Manager
Cwore Sportivo
Via Nicolosi 3
20121 Milan
Italy

Indented Form:

Dr. R. D. Stewart, Director
Univ. of Wisconsin-Superior
Transportation & Logistics Research Center
Erlanson Hall, Room 301
Superior, WI 54880, USA



4) Salutation

The salutation is the polite greetings with which a letter begins. The customary formal greeting in a business letter is “Dear Sirs” or “Gentlemen”. It should be placed two spaces below the inside address.

5) Body

This part contains the actual message of the letter. It is the important part of a business letter, which includes the opening sentences and the closing sentence. Letters should be divided into clear paragraphs. The opening sentences can be the quotation of the date, reference, subject and basic contents of other’s letter, or a brief self-introduction. Necessary background and important information should also be included in the body. The closing sentence is always a simple sentence or just a phrase which concludes the letter.

6) Complimentary Close

The complimentary close is mere a polite way of ending a letter. It should match the form of the salutation and should be placed three spaces below the body to the left for the blocked style or to the right for indented style or semi-block style. The most common sets of salutation and complimentary close are:

Formal:

British English: Dear Sirs, /Yours faithfully, /Faithfully yours,

American English: Gentlemen, /Yours (very) truly, / (Very) Truly yours,

7) Signature

A letter should be signed by hand, and in ink. Because many handwritten signatures are illegible, the name of the signer is usually typed below the signature and followed by his job title or position. For example:

The Overseas Co. , Ltd.
(Signature)
John Brown
General Manager

The Optional Parts

The optional parts of a letter are the followings below.

8) References

The references may include a file number, departmental code or the initials of the signer of the writer. To avoid confusion, they are marked “Our ref.” and “Your ref.”. They may be placed immediately below the letterhead.



9) Attention Line (Attn/Att)

The attention line is used to direct the letter to a specific individual or section of the firm. It generally follows the inside address. For example:

Attn: Mr. John Edison/Att: Mr. John Edison

Attn: Export Department/ Att: Export Department

10) Subject Line

The subject line is often inserted between the salutation and the body of the letter to invite attention to the topic of the letter. It is introduced as “Subject/Re” or nothing. For example:

Subject: Sales Contract. 2006-118

Re: Damage in Transit

Tv Set

11) Carbon Copy Notation (C. C. /cc)

When copies of the letter are sent to others, type c. c below the signature at the left margin.

12) Enclosure (Encl)

Two line-spacing below the carbon copy notation the writer may indicate one or more enclosures in the letter by following any one of those examples:

Enclosures: Price lists

Encls: Catalogues

13) Postscript (P. S.)

When you find something forgotten to be included in the body of the letter before the envelope is to be sealed up, you may write it in a postscript with a simple signature again. The adding of a P. S. should, however, be avoided as far as possible, since it may suggest you fail to plan your letter well before you write or dictate it. If you forget to mention something important in the letter body, rewrite the letter instead of using the afterthought.

If it is not avoidable, you can write the P. S. two lines below any other notations, and flush with the left margin.

14) Identification Line

This line should be typed two spaces below the typed signature, which shows only the initials of the typist. If the director's name is not typed in the signature area, the identification line shows the initials of both the director and the typist. For example, if a letter is directed by Robin Seaton and typed by Helen Marsden, the acceptable forms of the identification line can be written like this:

RS/HM, RS/hm, RS: HM, RS: hm

The following letter is designed to illustrate the position of each part mentioned above:



[Specimen]

Sample 1

1 INTEGRATED COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY CO. LTD.

Rm 808, Kyo-Won-Kong-Jea 35-2 Yeoido

Young Dung Po

Seoul

South Korea

Tel: 822-782-4641

Fax: 822-785-4245

2 June 12, 2016

3 Dr Brenda Lincoln

ATT Computers Corp. Pte Ltd

88 Kitchener Road, #02-15

Jalan Besar Plaza

Singapore 208512

9 Attn: Mr. I. Takabayashi

4 Dear Dr. Brenda Lincoln,

10 Re: Integrated Circuit Boards

5 Your company has been kindly introduced to us by Mr. Nelson, the president of Autos Company, as prospective buyers of Integrated Circuit Boards. As this item falls within the scope of our business activities, we shall be pleased to enter into direct trade relations with you at an early date.

To give you a general idea of the various kinds of products we handle, we enclose a brochure and a price list. Quotations and sample books will be airmailed to you on receipt of your specific enquiry.

We look forward to your favorable reply.

6 Yours faithfully,

for INTEGRATED COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY CO. LTD.

7 Kevin Smith



Sales Representative

14 KS: it

11 cc: Kim Sang-Chul

Moon Young-Seung

12 Enclosures 2

2. Format of Business Letters

Following traditional practice the indented style business letters are roughly divided into 3 styles: Full-block Format, Indented Format and Semi-block Format. The first one is used mainly in the United States while the second and third ones are used popularly in Britain and the old British colonies.

1) Full-block Format

The outstanding feature of this style is commencement of all typing lines, including those for the date, the inside address, salutation and complimentary close, at the left margin.



[Specimen]

Sample 2

Allen Incorporation
1580 St. Louis Street
Los Angeles, CA80018
U. S. A.

January 6, 2017

Guangzhou Textiles Imp & Exp Corporation
8-15/F Guangtex Building
438 Dongfeng Road (C)
Guangzhou, 510030
The People's Republic of China

Dear Sirs,

Your corporation has been recommended to us by John Simmon & Co of London, with whom



we have done business for many years. We take the liberty of writing to you in the hope of entering into business relations with you in the line of textiles business.

We are at present interested in your cotton piece goods and shall be glad if you will send us a copy of your catalogue and current price list.

Yours faithfully,
Allen Incorporation
James Smith

✎ 2) Indented Format

The feature of this style: the date is written at the right margin below letterhead, while inside address and salutation are at the left-margin. The beginning of each paragraph of the body is indented to 4—5 margins, and the complimentary close and signature are also written at the right margin.



[Specimen]

Sample 3

Heibo Electrexp Co
35 Sanlihe Street
Beijing, China
Tel: 27814554 Fax: 27814554

January 6, 2017

United Industries Ltd
Victorial Science Park
Ellingham NGT 4FE
United Kingdom

Dear Sirs,

We are indebted to your Commercial Office in Beijing, from whom we learn that you are a leading importer of electric goods in your area. As this item falls within our business scope, we are pleased to approach you for the establishment of trade relations with you.



In order to acquaint you with our business lines, we enclose a copy of our export list covering the main items now available for export. If you are interested in any of the items, please advise us and we shall be glad to make you an offer.

Your early reply will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,
(Signature)
Jiang Lin (Miss)
Sales Manager

3) Semi-block Format

The feature of this style is mixed up indented-format with full-block format. Its style is similar to indented format except that the layout of its body is similar to full-block format.



[Specimen]

Sample 4

Furnimport Co
313 Fuway Road
Shanghai, China
Tel: 47894534 Fax: 47894535

May 12, 2017

Stars Properties Co.
125 West Street
Chicago, IL 60698
U. S. A

Gentlemen,

We have obtained your name and address from Messrs Anderson & Co. , and we are writing to enquire whether you are willing to establish relations with us.

We have been importers of office equipment for many years. At present, we are interested in extending our range and would appreciate your sending us catalogues and quotations.



If your prices are competitive, we would expect to transact a significant volume of business.
We look forward to your early reply.

Sincerely yours,
(Signature)
Ma Xingjian
Assistant Manager

Reflecting the fast pace of business world, the popularity of the block style has been rapidly increasing in the recent years. Also, the wide spread use of facsimiles has further contributed to its increased use.

Busy secretaries and typists naturally prefer the blocked style to the indented style because it saves time. With this method, they do not have to use the tab at all. In addition, they can save even more time by using “Open Punctuation”.

Owing to the fact that streamlined “Blocked Style” reflects modern business procedures, we consider it inevitable that it will totally replace the outdated and time-consuming indented style in the near future.

3. Addressing Envelopes

The three important requirements of envelope addressing are accuracy, clearness, and good appearance. Business stationery ordinarily has the return address printed in the upper left corner of the envelope. Name and address of the receiver should be typed above half way down the envelope to leave enough space for the postmark and stamps. Post notations such as “Registered”, “Certified” or “Confidential” should be placed in the bottom left-hand corner. When a letter is mailed to a third person who is bound to pass it onto the addressee, write the third person’s name down below the addressee’s, write the words “care of” in front of it. For example:

Mr. Zhang Hai C/O Mr. Jone Smith

Like the inside address, there are two kinds of the format of envelope, which are “Block Form” and “Indented Form”. The former is used mainly in the United States while the latter is used popularly in Britain and the old British colonies. For example:



Block Form

China North Industries Corp	STAMP
25 Guanganmen Nanjie	
Beijing, 100053	
China	
(The above is the sender's name/address)	
	Mr. Williams Smith
	AUTOS Company
	30 Broadway
	New York, NY 10027
	U. S. A.
	(The above is the receiver's name/address)

Indented Form

Jonathan Evans	STAMP
Manager of Human Resources	
Scientific Research, Inc.	
4000 International Parkway	
Atlanta, GA 39307	
	Mr. John Smith
	Astin Asia Ltd.
	30/F Cornwall House
	1000 King's Road
	Hong Kong

4. Good Writing Principles

The purpose of communication is to obtain complete understanding between the parties involved, and to elicit the responses required. The first purpose can be achieved through clarity of expression, and the second demands the right approach. This means genuinely being interested in promoting mutually beneficial business arrangements, taking into account of the reader's requirements, level of understanding, and probable reaction to the information.

When you write a business letter, follow the following principles, which are called "7C Principles".



✓ 1) Clearness

Clearness is one of the main characteristics of business letter. The writer must try to make the recipient be clear at a glance of the purpose of his letter. To achieve this, he should keep in mind the purpose of his letter and use appropriate words in correct sentence structure and fully convey his meaning.

✓ 2) Conciseness

Conciseness is often regarded as the most important principle in writing. It can save time for both the writer and the recipient. Conciseness refers to most complete message but briefest expression without sacrificing clarity or courtesy. A good business letter should be accurate and to the point. In order to make your letter concise, try to shorten your sentence, and avoid wordy language and redundancy, or repetition, and eliminate unnecessary details.

✓ 3) Correctness

Correctness refers to not only proper expression with correct grammar, punctuation and spelling, but also appropriate tone which is helpful to achieve the goal. It is likely to convey the real message which will not cause offence even if it is a complaint or an answer to such a letter. Business letters must present factual information, accurate figures and exact terms in particular, for they involve the right, the duties and the interest of both parties often as the basis of all kinds of documents. Therefore, we should not understate nor overstate as understatement might result in less confidence and hinder the development of trade while overstatement would put you in an awkward position.

✓ 4) Concreteness

Concreteness means making the message specific, definite and vivid.

The letter should be specific and definite. Especially for letter calling for specific reply, such as offer, inquiring trade terms, etc. , concreteness is always emphasized. For instance, some qualities or characters of goods should be stated with exact figures and avoid words like “short” “long” or “good”. Give specific time with date, month, year and even hour, minute, if necessary, but avoid expression such as yesterday, next month, immediately, etc.

The following guidelines can help us write concretely: use specific facts and figures; put action in your verbs, prefer active verbs to passive verbs or words in which action is hidden; choose vivid, image-building words; pay attention to word orders, put modifiers in the right place.

✓ 5) Courtesy

Courtesy plays an important role in business letter writing as in all business activities. It is not mere politeness. It is a favorable introduction card which helps to strengthen your business bonds and establish new relations. Courtesy refers to show tactfully in your letters the honest friendship,



thoughtful appreciation, sincere politeness, considerate understanding and heartfelt respecting. The courteous writer should be sincere and tactful, thoughtful and appreciative.

6) Consideration

Prepare every message with the reader in mind and try to put yourself into his place.

Consideration is a key rule of good business writing. The letters you send out must leave the receiver a good impression. Try to give the consideration to the receivers' varied wishes, demand, interest and difficulties. Emphasize the "You-attitude" rather than "I- or We-attitude". Find the best way to convey your understanding and present the message. That enables a request to be refused without killing all hope of business or allows a refusal: to do a favor without harming friendship.

7) Completeness

A business letter is successful and functional only when it includes all the necessary information. An outline helps the letter to be full and complete. Make sure that all matters are mentioned, and all questions are answered. A complete business letter usually contains "Five W" and "One H", that is to say, who, what, when, where, why, and how. Incompleteness is not only impolite but also leaves the recipients' unfavorable impression towards your company. It is essential for the writer to check the message carefully before it is sent out.



New Words and Expressions

- component [kəm'pəʊnənt] n. 构成要素
- letterhead ['letəhed] n. 信头
- date [deɪt] n. 日期
- inside address 封内地址
- salutation [sælju(:)'teɪʃn] n. 称呼
- body ['bɒdi] n. 正文
- opening sentence 开头语
- closing sentence 结束语
- complimentary close 结尾敬语
- signature ['sɪɡnətʃə] n. 签名
- reference ['refrəns] n. 编号
- attention line 经办人
- subject line 事由
- carbon copy notation 抄送
- enclosure [ɪn'kləʊʒə] n. 附件
- postscript ['pəʊstskript, 'pəʊskript] n. 附言



identification line 承办人代号
 format [ˈfɔːmət, -mə:t] n. 格式
 full-block format 齐头式/平头式
 indented format 缩进式
 semi-block format 半齐头式
 clearness [ˈklɪənəs] n. 清楚
 conciseness[kənˈsaɪnsɪs] n. 简洁
 correctness[kəˈrektnəs] n. 准确
 concreteness[ˈkɒnkri:tɪs] n. 具体
 courtesy [ˈkɜːtəsi] n. 礼貌
 consideration [kənˌsɪdəˈreɪʃn] n. 体谅
 completeness [kəmˈpli:tənəs] n. 完整



Notes

1. Letterhead 信头

商业信函的信头一般印在信笺上端中央,也可在右边或左边。信头中含有发信人公司名称、地址、邮编、电话号码、传真号码、电子信箱等信息资料。信头有齐头式/并列式(Block Form)与斜列式/缩进式(Indented Form)两种。齐头式就是每行开头齐平的排列方式,随着计算机打印的日益推广,齐头式运用得越来越多。斜列式则是从第二行开始依次向里缩进一至两个字母的空间,这是相对较传统的信头排列方式。

2. Date 日期

地址下面写发信日期,次序是月、日、年,如 Feb. 27, 2005; 或日、月、年,如 27 Feb., 2005.

3. Inside Address 信内地址

现代商业信件,通常把收信人的姓名和地址打在信上,这样可以保持函件的完整,并便于归档立卷。其排列方式与信头一致,也可以有齐头式与斜列式两种。

4. Salutation 称呼

常见的正式称呼有: Dear Mr. Smith, Dear Mrs. Black, Dear Miss Brown, Dear Mrs. White。Ms. 用于婚姻状况不明的女子姓名之前。若称呼多个男性,则在姓名前用 Mr. 的复数形式 Messrs。Mrs. 没有复数形式,若称呼多个女性,则在姓名前用 Mmes., 如 Mmes. White and Gray.

写给一个公司时,可以用 Dear Sirs, 也可以用 Gentlemen, 美国人一般用 Gentlemen。称呼后用冒号或逗号均可,但前者显得更正式。Gentlemen 后常用冒号。

5. Body 正文

正文是商务书信最重要的部分,包括开头语和结束语。信的段落要层次分明,条理清楚。书信正文的开头语常常引述对方的来信日期、编号、主题和基本内容,或作简要的自我



介绍,表明目的和要求。开头语一般自成一节,文字要简洁明了。中间的段落常给出必要的背景信息和佐证的信息,涉及具体问题。结束语通常是一个简单的句子或短语,它独成一段,用来总结本文所谈内容,提示对收信人的要求答复,或作必要的声明等。

正文的每一段开头可以用缩进式,也可用齐头式,由于电脑的普及,为了方便,齐头式被广泛使用,这也包括信函的其他所有项目,如日期、事由、结尾套语等,都紧贴信纸左边开始。为清楚起见,采用齐头式的各项目之间,通常空一行,正文的各段之间也空一行。

函件只写在信纸的一面,很少两面都用。如果正文较长,一页纸不够,第二页应至少有三行正文,不可没有正文而只有一个签名。第一页最后一行的右边写上 to be continued, 第二页信纸不用信头,颜色、大小,应与第一页相同。第二页第一行要写上收信者单位、页数和日期。例如:

Collins Telecom Company, - 2 - March 24, 2017

6. Complimentary Close 结尾套语

结尾套语是写信人对收信人所表示的一种谦称,只占一行,低于正文一两行放在信的右或左下角。如采用齐头式,则紧贴左边。第一个词的开头字母要大写,末尾要用逗号。

在商业书信中,最常见的结尾套语有: Yours faithfully, Faithfully yours, Yours truly, Truly yours, 也可用 Yours sincerely, Sincerely yours 等。

7. Signature 签名

写信人应在结尾套语之下签上姓名。业务书信和较正式的个人书信通常签上全名,不能只用缩略字母。如果是打字,在打好的姓名之上,仍需手写签上自己的姓名,以表示郑重,使收信人相信信件的真实性。签名下面可以写上自己的职称或头衔。例如:

Truly yours,

(Signature)

Alfred Johnson, Office Manager

South Philadelphia Mobiles Company

8. Reference 信函编号

信函编号是为了信件归档、查找之用,通常由我方参考号码(Our Ref.)和对方参考号码(Your Ref.)组成。例如:

Our Ref.: CS 49/78006

Your Ref.: 2007/IB318

9. Attention Line 经办人

如收信人为某公司,而寄信人要求该公司某特定人或某个部门收阅和经办,就需要在信内地址和称呼之间用 Attention(缩写为 Attn.) 引导并注明。格式如下:

Pacific Marine Insurance Company

643 Powell St.

San Francisco, Ca. 94108

Attention: Mr. H. S. Kennedy



Dear Sirs,

10. Subject Line 事由

事由写在称呼下面、信笺中间的位置。事由可让对方在阅读信的正文以前对信的主题、内容一目了然。另外,在登记归档和查卷时也很方便。

11. Carbon Copy Notation 抄送

如本信件有抄件寄第三者,则打上 C. C. 或 cc 字样,然后写上第三者的名称和地址(有的只写名称,不写地址)。例如:

C. C. : Rotic Co.

341 Queen Avenue

Yakima Wa. 98902

cc to: CEO

cc to: Mr. Carl Mason

Copy to: Sales Manager

Copies to: directors

12. Enclosure 附件

信中如有附件,则在签名下方左下角注上 Enc. 或 Encl., 其复数形式是 Encls.。附件有两个以上时,应注明数字。如附件特别重要,应给以简短的标题。例如:

Encls: 1. Annual Report 2 copies

2. List of Major Accounts

3. Profit and Loss Statement

13. Postscript 附言

附言用于补写要叙述的事情。一般来说,正式的信件最好少用或不用。附言有时也可用来强调或提醒一些信中特别重要的内容。

14. Identification Line 承办人代号

承办人代号是由信件口授者(dictator)和秘书(或打字员)的姓名的首字母组成的,用冒号或斜线分开,如 FCM/HL, FCM: HL, FCM/hl, fcm: hl 等。

信件打上承办人代号是为了提供此信件产生的信息资料,便于必要时查对之用。

15. Full-block Format 齐头式/平头式

书信格式的一种,其特点是:从日期开始,书信的每个构成要素都从左边界开始写,段落的开头也不必空格。这种格式便于打印。

16. Indented Format 缩进式/斜列式

书信格式的一种,其特点是:日期写在信纸的右上方,信内地址和称呼顶格写,正文每段的开头缩进 4—5 个空格,结尾套语和签名写在右下方。

17. Semi-block Format 半齐头式

在这种格式中,日期、结尾套语和签名是从纸张中线偏右开始打印的,其他的要素均从左边界开始。



18. Your company has been introduced/recommended to us by...

承蒙……介绍,我们得知贵公司……

19. prospective buyers 潜在买主

20. enter into something with 开始;建立(某种关系等)

21. We take the liberty of writing to you in the hope of entering into business relations with you in the line of textiles business.

我们冒昧致函贵公司,希望与你方建立业务关系,从事纺织品贸易。

liberty 冒昧

take the liberty of something/to do something 在外贸业务上,这一片语是在写信人与收信人不很熟悉的情况下使用。因它给人一种过分客套的感觉,在现代书信中已较少用。

line 行业

We have engaged in this line for many years.

我们经营此行已有多年历史。

22. We are indebted to... for...承蒙……的介绍得知……

这是较正式且较客气的说法,其实际意思相当于:We learn...from...“我们从……得之……”。类似较正式且较客气的说法还有:We owe to... for...或者 We owe...to... 以及 Through the courtesy of..., we learn...。例如:

We owe to your Embassy in Beijing for your name and address./We owe your name and address to your Embassy in Beijing.

承蒙贵国驻华使馆的介绍得知贵公司的名称和地址。

Through the courtesy of your Commercial Counsellor's Office in Beijing, we learn that you are a leading importer of Chinese textiles.

承蒙贵国驻华使馆的介绍得知贵公司为中国纺织品的主要进口公司。

23. We enclose a copy of our export list...随函附寄我方出口商品目录一份……

动词 enclose 在商务书信中使用频率极高,基本意思是“随函附寄”。例如:

Enclosed is a copy of our price list.

随函附寄我方价目单一份。

Enclosed we are sending you a copy of our price list.

现随函附寄我方价目单一份。

Enclosed please find a copy of our price list.

随函附寄我方价目单一份,请查收。

24. At present, we are interested in extending our range and would appreciate your sending us catalogues and quotations.

现欲扩展业务范围,望惠寄贵方商品目录和报价单。

本句中的“range”一词系指“range of activities”(经营范围)或“range of commodities”(商品范围)。



“扩大我方的经营范围”,英语可表达为 to extend the present range of commodities handled by us 或 enlarge our present business scope。例如:

In order to extend the present range of commodities handled by us, we would request you to send us a list showing all the items you can supply, but which are not yet handled by us, for our consideration.

为了扩大我方目前经营的商品范围,我方要求贵方寄来一份货单,介绍贵方可以供应,而我方尚未经营的商品,供我方研究。

We shall appreciate it if you will offer us some new items to enlarge our present business scope.

若能向我方提供一些新产品,以扩大我方的经营范围将不胜感激。

25. We would expect to transact a significant volume of business.

本公司希望达成大笔交易。

“做交易”“与……做买卖”英语可表达为: to do business, to transact business, to conclude a transaction。例如:

If your terms and conditions are favourable, we expect to conclude a substantial transaction with you.

如果贵方的条款和条件优惠的话,我方希望与贵方达成一笔大宗交易。

26. Clearness 清楚

商务信函的写作原则之一,就是信的内容要主题突出,言简意赅,一目了然。要把必要的事项叙述清楚,不要模棱两可,故弄玄虚,闪烁其辞。尽量使用短句,避免陈词滥调。只要觉得有碍于对方理解或易于造成歧义的地方,应加以修改,把问题表达清楚。

27. Conciseness 简洁

简洁是指用最精练的语言把信息传递给对方。要做到这一点,应注意选词、用词,避免拖泥带水,避免陈词滥调。

28. Correctness 准确

准确是指商务书信要表达准确,不能言过其实。要用正确的语言,准确地把信息传递给对方。

29. Concreteness 具体

具体的文字能使收信人产生明确的印象和概念。因此,应避免使用表示抽象或笼统概念的言词。

30. Courtesy 礼貌

礼貌是商务书信的一个重要的语言特点。一封彬彬有礼的书信可以博取对方好感,使对方乐意与你合作。无论何时,只要有必要,别忘了说“thank you”“would you please...”“we would appreciate it...”(“谢谢”“请您……”“我们将感激……”)之类的语句。另外,一封周到的信件应该客气,信中所言宽容而机敏。

31. Consideration 体谅

写信时,要多采用收信人的态度(“your attitude”),即多为对方着想。多从对方的角度看



问题,也可以把双方的距离缩小到几乎站在同一立场的态度,使对方认真考虑信中所言。

32. Completeness 完整

为了达成交易目的,写信人应该给对方提供所有需要的信息,或答复来信所提出的全部问题和要求。一封完整的商务书信,一般包括五个“w”和一个“h”,即 who, what, when, where, why, 和 how。比如,书写订货信时,应当详细说明:

谁要定货(who),要什么货(what),何时需要(when),货物发往何地(where),如何付款(how)。如果取消定单,应该说明原因(why)。



Useful Expressions on Opening Sentences and Closing Sentences

1. 特此奉告:

- a. We are pleased to inform you that...
- b. We have pleasure in informing you of...
- c. We have the pleasure of apprising you of...
- d. We take the liberty of announcing to you that...
- e. Please allow us to call your attention to...

2. 专此奉告:

- a. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that (of) ...
- b. The object of the letter is to tell you that (of) ...

3. 惠请告知:

- a. Please inform me that (of) ...
- b. I will thank you for your informing me that (of) ...
- c. I should be glad if you would inform me that (of) ...

4. 兹确认我公司某月某日函。

- a. We confirm our letter of the...of this month...
- b. We confirm our last letter of the June 10th...
- c. In confirming our telegram of this morning...

5. 敬悉你公司某月某日函。

- a. We have pleasure in acknowledging receipt of your esteemed favour of May the 3rd...
- b. We are in receipt of your letter of the July 7th...
- c. We have duly received your favour of the March 5th...
- d. We thank you for your letter of the May 5th...

6. 敬复你公司某月某日函。

- a. In reply to your letter of the 5th of May, I have to inform you that (of) ...
- b. We are in receipt of yours of the May 15th, in reply to which we are pleased to state that...
- c. Replying to yours of the 8th of February regarding..., I would say that...



- d. In reply, we would like to say...
7. 本公司深感遗憾, 必须奉告……
- a. We regret to inform you that (of) ...
- b. We very much regret to announce you that...
- c. It is most regrettable that we have to inform you that (of) ...
- d. We are regretful that we have to inform you that (of) ...
8. 本公司深感遗憾, 得悉……
- a. We are very sorry to hear (know) that...
- b. We very much regret to hear that...
- c. We regret that we have been informed that (of) ...
9. 感谢你公司某月某日函。
We thank you for your inquiry of the May 10th...
10. 随函附上……, 请查收……
- a. Enclosed please find...
- b. We enclose herewith...
- c. We have pleasure in enclosing here with...
- d. We attached (hereto) ...
11. 遵照贵公司某月某日来函指示……
- a. In accordance with the instructions given (continued) in your favour of the May 10th...
- b. According to the instructions given in your letter under date of the 20th of last month...
- c. In conformity with (to) your instructions of the 10th this month...
- d. To conform to your instructions of the 10th this month...
- e. In compliance with your instructions of the 10th this month...
- f. To comply with your instructions of the 10th this month...
12. 关于详情, 将于下回奉告。
- a. I will write you particulars in my next.
- b. I will inform you more fully in my next.
- c. I will inform you the details in my next.
13. 盼你公司及早回复。
- a. We hope to receive your favour at an early date.
- b. We trust you will favour us with a prompt reply.
- c. Your prompt reply would be greatly appreciated.
- d. We look forward to your early reply.
- e. We are looking forward to receiving your early reply.
14. 我们将随时为你服务。
- a. We assure you of our best services at all times.



b. We shall spare no efforts in endeavouring to be of service to you.

15. 若有机会我公司也愿做类似的服务。

a. We shall be happy to have an opportunity of reciprocating to you on a similar occasion.

b. We wish to reciprocate the goodwill.

文化小贴士

了解沟通对象

为了使沟通顺利进行,我们在进行沟通之前应对沟通对象有详细的了解。① 首先了解他们的时间观念。② 礼节。有些地方如日本和韩国非常讲究礼节,商务活动中更为正式,而美国则相对非正式。③ 态度。有些地方的人认为协议及合同是神圣不可侵犯的,但有些地方的人对待合同的态度较为随意,他们认为随着条件的变动,协议的内容自然要做调整,他们更注重人际关系。④ 宗教信仰与禁忌。



知识展读

商务信函写作 TIPS

1. 最好使用公司的信纸。
2. 保证行文段落清晰。
3. 尽量保证文字简洁。
4. 用语要谦逊有礼。
5. 发信之前认真检查是否有错。
6. 记得在文末署名。



Exercises

I. Answer the following questions

1. How many principal parts is a business letter composed of? What are they?
2. What are the three main formats of a business letter used today? Which format do you prefer?
3. What is the position of the receiver's address on an envelope?
4. What is the position of the writer's address on an envelope?
5. What is the P. S. ?

II. Choose the best answer

1. There is a steady demand in Europe _____ leather gloves _____ high quality.
A. for, of B. in, which C. for, which D. in, of
2. We are arranging for an inspection tour of _____ the material was processed.



- A. place B. the place C. where D. there
3. We are reconsidering those trade terms _____ might be adverse to the interest of our principals.
- A. what B. that C. when D. where
4. We thank you for your letter of November 24th _____ your purchase of 10 M/T wild rice.
- A. confirm B. confirming C. to confirm D. confirmed
5. We specialize _____ all kinds of metals and are always ready to buy in large quantities.
- A. at B. from C. on D. in
6. The supply is inadequate to meet the _____.
- A. demand B. purchase C. conquest D. require
7. In the _____ we would ask you to dispatch the replacement to us as soon as possible.
- A. meantime B. meanwhile C. time D. occasion
8. We are pleased to enclose a _____ quotation for bathroom showers.
- A. detail B. detailed C. detailing D. details
9. We shall inform you _____ the date of shipment.
- A. before B. behind C. in D. on
10. Owing to the unforeseen difficulties, the factory cannot send the goods to us _____ schedule.
- A. before B. behind C. in D. on

III. Translate the following sentences into Chinese

1. It was a pleasure to receive your letter of May 4th and to learn that you are making plans for your Mr. Smith to visit our country in September.
2. If Mr. Peter so wishes we can also introduce him to some of our sister corporations with whom you may like to do business.
3. Please let us know the time of your arrival. We will then arrange to meet you at the airport and drive you to your hotel.
4. We used to import machines from USA but now we wish to establish business relations with you.
5. I am making for Mr. Black to have a discussion with Director Zhou.
6. It gives us a great pleasure to introduce to you by this letter Mr. Wang, a manager of Hongkong Huanhai company.
7. We should regard it as a personal favor if you would give him some beneficial advice and experience, and will be always happy to reciprocate.
8. Our handicrafts have met with a favorable reception in Australia and France.
9. Please accept our thanks for the very pleasant time we spent during the weekend at your home.



10. For your information, in our trade with customers, we always adhere to the principle of equality and mutual benefit.

IV. Fill in the blanks with proper words

Dear Sir,

I am r _____ to your letter of 18 June a _____ us to clear our May balance.

I a _____ for not settling the account sooner, but d _____ to the unfortunate death of Mr. Noel, our accountant, we were not able to s _____ any of our outstanding b _____.

Please find e _____ our c _____ for \$ 820, and a _____ our apologies for any i _____.

Yours sincerely,
Signature

V. Translate the following sentences into English

1. 望能早日收到你方具体询价单。
2. 他们可能要购买尖端设备。
3. 我们的经济是健全的,欣欣向荣的。
4. 随函寄去我方价目单一份,请查收。
5. 我们最不愿做那些使顾客失望的事,特别是像您这样的老顾客。
6. 无论信息自身多么坚强有力,只有当信件的信息传递无误时才能有效。
7. 应当使用明了的语言,以使收信人能理解商务信函。
8. 事情越是急迫,信息越是要一而再、再而三地仔细检查。
9. 如果贵方能与我方合作,我们将十分感激。
10. 商务信函应当始终包含收信人或公司的姓名和完整的地址。

VI. Write a letter with the given particulars below, using necessary capitals and punctuation

1. Mr. Wang Jian, from Rock Resources Import & Export Corp. Ltd. , 21 Lan Wu Hua, Haidian District, Beijing 100025, China

2. Mr. Paul Smith, the sales manager, from River Bikes Inc. , 22 York Road, Chicago, Illinois, USA

3. July 25, 2016

4. Dear Sir

5. Your ref. : 206MI/2010

6. Our ref. : 206TMR/2010

7. Yours sincerely,