



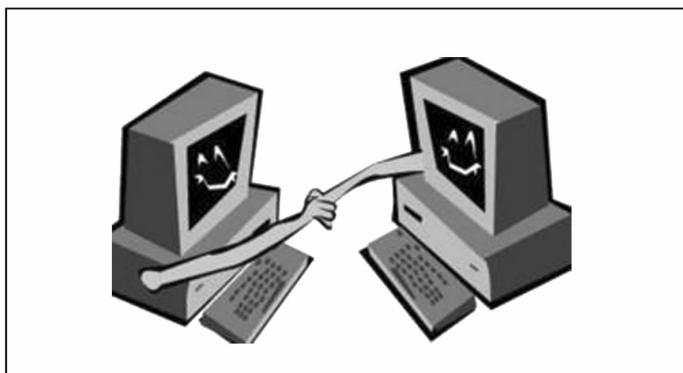
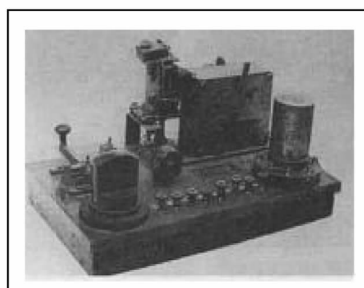
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Part I

Basic Knowledge of Business Letter

外贸信函的基本知识





Task of Working

Guangwei Zhou used to be a vocational college student whose major is international business; now he is lucky to be employed in Rizhao Import & Export Corporation and works as a foreign trade salesman.

He is full of confidence to start his business from the e-mails or letters, for business letters are one of the most important and widely used in communication. In order to be more flexible in following writing, he is going to review the layout of letters that still follow in some way the usual practice in international business.

Knowledge Link

Foreign business letter refers to the letters, telegrams/cables, telexes, faxes and e-mails dealing in international business trade. Because letters can present some details which can not be done by other means of communication. It serves two main functions—to convey a message and to provide a permanent record for future reference and also valuable proof in the event of legal disputes. Business letters are of crucial importance in the conduct of business activities.

The contents of business correspondence involve many aspects of international business trade, mainly include: Establishing business relations; Inquiry; Offer; Counter-offer; Order; Acceptance; Contract; Packing; Shipment; Payment; Insurance and Claim. Most business letters and proposals are opportunities to influence decisions. Usually it's a one-time opportunity. That's why you should accept professional training!

Writing Tips

Requirements of Writing Envelopes

- ▶ Envelopes for business letters ordinarily have return name and address (writer's name and address) printed in the upper left corner of the envelope. The receiver's name and address should be written about half way down the envelope.
- ▶ Special attention should be paid to the fact that the receiver's name and address in the envelope should be in exact identical with the inside address (in block form or indented style) in the letter. The stamp is generally put in the upper right-hand corner of the envelope.



Requirements of Writing Foreign Trade Letters

- ▶ Learning the tone of writing;
- ▶ Learning the layout and format of a letter, strategy and word choice;
- ▶ Learning the 7Cs principles of writing;
- ▶ Learning the skills of negotiation.

Text

I Envelopes 信封

● 1. Format of Envelopes 信封格式

The writing formats of envelopes should be conformed strictly with the forms of letter. When the letter takes indented form, the envelope will be in the same while if the letter takes the blocked form, the envelope will be the blocked form. The relevant writing formats are shown as follows.

1.1 Indented Form 缩进式

Sender's name and address	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Stamp</div>	
Receiver's name and address <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/>	





Sample

写信人名称、地址

Overseas Trading Co.
88 Market Street
London, E. C. 3.

Stamp

Rizhao Chemicals
Imp. & Exp. Corporation
Li Ming

收信人名称、地址：
逐行右缩

Chaoyang District
Beijing 100022
P. R. China

1.2 Blocked Form 齐头式

Sender's name and address

Stamp

Receiver's name and address



Sample

写信人名称、地址

CHINA NATIONAL CEREALS, OILS AND FOODSTUFFS IMP & EXP CORP.
11th Floor, Jingxin Building. 2A Dong San Huan Beilu
Beijing, People's Republic of China

Stamp

EL MAR PACKING COMPANY
12 MAIN STREET, FRESNO
CALIFORNIA, USA

收信人名称、地址：
左端对齐

Practical Specimen

Jessica
1314F. No. 288. Sec.5 Jessica E.Rd.
ZhongZheng Dist,Taipei 10010
Taiwan

台北
2015.12.23

Merry Xmas!

Santa Claus
North Pole, HOH OH0,
Canada



2. Envelope Addressing 信封的写法

- (1) Business envelopes ordinarily have the return address (the writer's address) printed in the upper-left corner.
 - (2) The receiver's name and address should be typed about half way down the envelope.
 - (3) The postmark or stamps should be placed in the upper right-hand corner.
- e. g.

Return Address	Stamp	
Receiver's Name		
Receiver's Address		
Remarks		

- (4) No punctuations except for abbreviations.
- (5) While the bottom left-hand corner is for post notations such as "Confidential, Private, Personal, Urgent/ Immediate, Registered, Express, Ordinary Mail, Sample, Printed Matters, Par Avion / By Air".

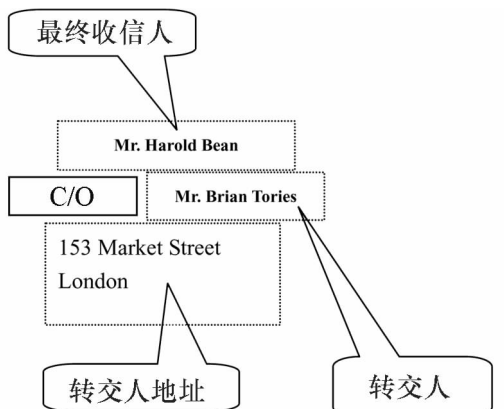
Sometimes one more part will appear in the letter, and it takes the form of "Kindness of (捎交)":

e. g. *Mr. Charles Wood*

Kindness of Mr. J. W. Smith (由 Mr. J. W. Smith 捎交给 Mr. Charles Wood)

Sometimes the receiver is in his/her temporary position, you should write to him/her of "C/O (转交)": *in care of*,

e. g. *Mr. Bush C/O Mr. President Obama*.

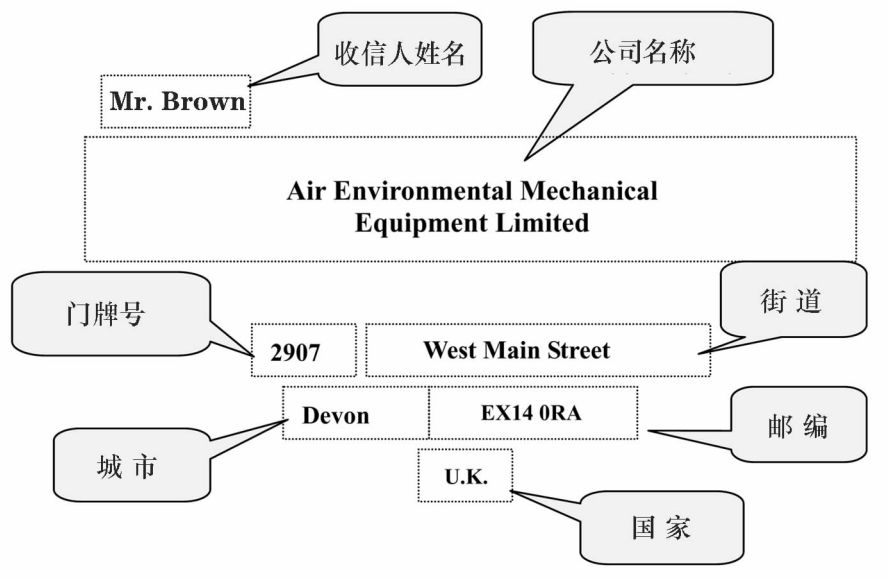




(6) Generally, the information about the receiver is laid out in the following order:

- receiver's name;
- company name;
- address(door number, street) or post office box;
- city, state and postcode;
- country.

e. g.



Sample

Michael Wang Evergreen Luggage Co., Ltd. 120 Nanjing Road, Shanghai, P. R. China 20082	(stamp)
Confidential	Mr. Eugene Brigham C/O Mrs. Olga E. Cintron General Manager Four Seasons Merchandise Co., Limited 2801 East Vernon Avenue Vernon, CA 90058 USA





II Letters 信函

1. Format of Foreign Business Letter 外贸信函的格式

There are three major types of widely used formats of business letter: blocked form, indented form and blended form.

1.1 Blocked Form 齐头式

The blocked format is a modern style, the simplest and most widely used in business communication now, especially in the US. Its main feature is that all typing lines start from the left edge of the page. The whole letter is single spaced except for a double space between paragraphs.

The diagram illustrates the layout of a business letter in blocked form. The components are listed on the left side of the page:

- Letterhead** (indicated by a callout pointing to the top right)
- Date**
- Inside Address**
- Reference Line**
- Salutation**
- Complimentary Close**
- Signature**

Annotations in Chinese provide additional details:

- A callout box states: "除信头外,全部左对齐" (Except for the letterhead, all is left-aligned).
- A callout box states: "段落之间: 空行" (Between paragraphs: blank line).

The letter body is represented by several horizontal dashed lines, indicating the flow of the text.

*Sample Letter 1*

H. Woods & Co. Ltd.
Nesson House, Newell Street
Birmingham B15 3EL
Tel: (44-121) 4560000 Fax: (44-121)4560001

1 March, 2014

Shanghai Textile Trading Co. Ltd.
72 Zhongshan Rd.
Shanghai 200001
China
The Manager

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are interested in tweed lengths suitable for skirt-making and would like to have details of your prices and terms.

It would be helpful if you could supply samples.

Yours faithfully,
Larry Crane
China Trade Manager





1.2 Indented Form 缩进式

Indented form is a traditional style. Its main feature is that the date, complimentary close and signature are lined up in the right of the page, and the first line of each paragraph is indented three to five spaces. There may or may not be a double space between paragraphs. The following is an example.

The diagram illustrates the layout of an indented form letter. It includes the following components and labels:

- Letterhead**: Located at the top center.
- Date**: Located at the top right, with a callout box containing the Chinese text "日期" (Date).
- Inside Address**: Located on the left side.
- Reference Line**: Located on the left side.
- Salutation**: Located on the left side, with three sets of dashed lines for the address, each preceded by three small squares (□□□). A callout box points to the first set of squares with the Chinese text "段首缩格" (Indent at the start of the paragraph).
- Complimentary Close**: Located on the right side.
- Signature**: Located on the right side, below the complimentary close.
- Callout**: A speech bubble on the right side contains the Chinese text "段落之间不空行" (No blank line between paragraphs).
- Callout**: A box at the bottom right contains the Chinese text "结尾敬语 署名 居右" (Complimentary close, signature, right-aligned).

*Sample Letter 2*

H. Woods & Co. Ltd.
Nesson House, Newell Street
Birmingham B15 3EL
Tel: (44-121) 4560000 Fax: (44-121)4560001

1 March, 2014

Shanghai Textile Trading Co. Ltd.
72 Zhongshan Rd.
Shanghai 200001,
China
The Manager

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are interested in tweed lengths suitable for skirt-making and would like to have details of your prices and terms.

It would be helpful if you could supply samples.

Yours faithfully,
Larry Crane
China Trade Manager

1.3 Blended Form 混合式

Blended form is the one combined with the full blocked style and the indented style. Its main feature is that the date, complimentary close and signature are again lined up in the right of the page, but the first line of paragraphs forming the body of letter are not indented and there is a double space between paragraphs. The example is as follows.





Letterhead

Date

Inside Address

Reference Line

Salutation

日期居右

段落之间
空行

Complimentary Close

Signature

结尾敬语
签署



Sample Letter 3

H. Woods & Co. Ltd.
Nesson House, Newell Street
Birmingham B15 3EL
Tel: (44-121) 4560000 Fax: (44-121)4560001

1 March, 2014

Shanghai Textile Trading Co. Ltd.
72 Zhongshan Rd.
Shanghai 200001,
China
The Manager

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are interested in tweed lengths suitable for skirt-making and would like to have details of your prices and terms..

It would be helpful if you could supply samples.

Yours faithfully,
Larry Crane
China Trade Manager

2. Layout and Ways of Writing 信函的行文格式和写法

The structure of a foreign business letter has seven basic parts: (1) heading (letter-head); (2) date; (3) inside address; (4) salutation; (5) body; (6) complimentary close; (7) signature. And the other optional parts as follows: (1) attention line; (2) subject line; (3) reference number; (4) enclosure; (5) copy notation; (6) postscript; (7) identifying initials and so on, which depends on the different situations of each writing requirement. (see the following letter)





2.1 Heading or Letterhead 信头

Expressing a firm's personality, usually includes the following parts: the company's name, address, telephone, telegraph address, telegraphic code, telex number, Internet address, e-mail address and etc..

Usually, the address is written line by line. The first line is the company's name; the second line, in turn, includes the house number and street, name of the city and province, and the postcode; the third line is the name of the country. If there are several buildings with the same house number, it should be indicated clearly.

e. g. ABC Company	(公司名称)
10 Broadway Street	(门牌, 街道)
New York	(城市名称)
U. S. A.	(国家名称)
Tel: (1-212)41965253 Fax: (1-212)41965364	
http://will.nease.net	
E-mail: service@egluggage.com.cn	

2.2 Date 日期

It is usually placed two lines below the last line of the letterhead, mostly at the right margin or at the left margin for blocked form. It refers to the date on which the letter is written. The date consists of the month, day and year. In writing dates, please note that "month" can be abbreviated, but "year" can not be abbreviated and it must be written in full. The following are the order of ways of writing.

- day/month/year (English practice): Day can be before month, and there is no comma between month and year;
- month/day/year (American practice): Day can also be after month, and there is comma between month and year.

e. g. 1. 2014 年 6 月 10 日

10 June, 2014 (English practice)

June 10, 2014 (American practice)

- Month in the date should not be in abbreviation, and in figure.

e. g. 2. X: 12/10/2014

2.3 Inside Address 信内地址

The usual practice should be set out the name and address of one's correspondent at



the head of the letter and the same as in the envelope, which shall be the name and address of the receiver. But the official correspondence should be placed at the foot, in the bottom left-hand corner.

English address may have the following parts:

- (1) name of house;
- (2) number of house and name of street;
- (3) name of city or town;
- (4) county or state and its post code;
- (5) name of country.

① To an individual in a company

Before the name, there should be titles such as Mr. , Mrs. , Dr. , etc. , while after the name, there should be the post of the receiver.

e. g. 1. Mr. George F. Moore

Advertising Manager
Price & Patterson
234 Seventh Avenue
New York 5, New York
U. S. A.

e. g. 2. Ms. Li Fang

Manager, Human Resource
Logitech Electronics Corporation
85 Jinji Road
Zhuhai, Guangdong 519067

■ Sample

罗技电子公司人力资源部经理
李芳
广东省珠海市金鸡路 85 号
邮政编码: 519067

② To an anonymous official in the company

e. g. Sales Manager

Office Systems Pty Ltd.
124 Oak Street
Chatswood
NSW 2067
Australia

③ To a company

e. g. Messrs, Kato & Co. , Ltd.

2 Nichome, Ginza Nishi
Chuo-ku, Tokyo





2.4 Salutation 称呼敬语

The salutation is placed on the left under the inside name and address. It is usually added with Dear Mr. or Dear Ms. before the receiver's surname; while after it, there is a comma. If it is difficult to make sure the receiver's surname, his or her post can be used to replace it. Sometimes the letter is not addressed to a specific person, then "Dear sir(s)", "Gentleman(men)" are usually used.

Here are some ways to write the salutation

When addressing a group of people or a company, you should use one of the following salutations:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Gentlemen/Dear Sirs, —if all the readers are male

Ladies/Dear Madams, —if all the readers are female

Dear Sirs or Madams,

Dear Sir, —to a man if you do not know his name

Dear Madam, —to a woman if you do not know her

If the receiver is known to the writer personally, a less formal and warmer greeting is used as follows:

Dear Mr Smith, —to a man

Dear Mrs Smith, —to a married woman

Dear Miss Smith, —to an unmarried woman

Dear Ms Smith, —to a married or unmarried woman

Dear John, —to a friend or someone you know well

My dear Mr. Wang, (here "dear" cannot be written in capital.)

My dear Miss Long,

2.5 Body 正文

The body of the letter is the message that the writer expresses his ideas, requirements, purposes and wishes to the recipient. It is the most important part of the letter. It contains the actual message of the letter. It states the writer's ideas, opinions, purposes and wishes, etc..

It generally is divided into three parts: opening, middle and closing paragraph.



The first part:

If you are the first time to write, you should write your purpose or the question you refer to in the first paragraph. For example:

- ① We're writing in the hope of establishing business relations with you.
- ② We confirm cables exchanged as follows.

If you reply to a letter, you should refer to the date, reference or the contents of the previous correspondence. For example:

- ① We refer to your letter dated October 25 for the order of 500 sets of TV sets.
- ② In reply to your mail request of June 16, we're offering as follows.

The second part:

It contains the main points and it may consist of several paragraphs.

The closing part:

In business letters, in the last paragraph you can summarize what you write in the letter or present your demand or desire. For example:

- ① In view of the above, we sincerely hope you'll not think us unaccommodating.
- ② Please look into the matter as one of urgency and let us have your cable reply by return.
- ③ We look forward to your early reply.

2.6 Complimentary Close 结束敬语

The complimentary close is similar to goodbye in oral English. It is a matter of customs, and a polite way of ending a letter. The most commonly used complimentary closes are such as "Yours faithfully" or "Faithfully yours" and "Yours truly" or "Truly yours", and with comma after it, and only the first letter is capitalized. The close can be formal or informal, depending on whether the writer is familiar with the addressee. Usually we keep them in pace with the salutation and occasion. Most commonly used are as follows:

Occasion/Style	Salutation	Complimentary Closes
Very Formal	My dear Sir/ Madam,	Respectfully, /Respectfully yours,
Formal	Dear Sir/ Madam, Gentlemen/Sirs,	Yours truly, Yours faithfully, (British usage)





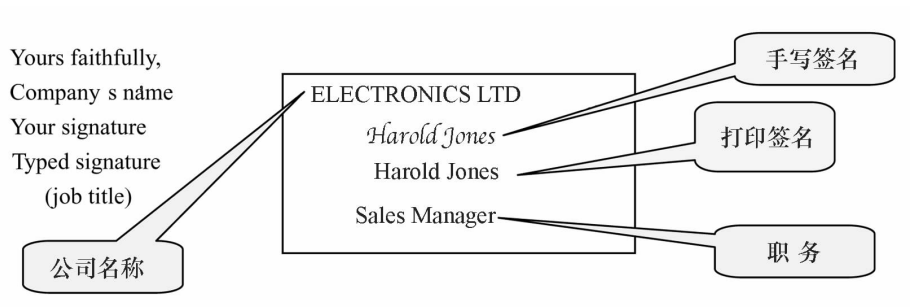
续 表

Occasion/Style	Salutation	Complimentary Closes
Less Formal	Dear Mr. Miller, Dear Miss Green, Dear Mrs. Smith, Dear Ms. White, My dear Mrs. (or Miss.) Bush,	Sincerely yours, (American usage) Yours sincerely, (British usage)
Personal (Implying personal relation.)	Dear Mr./Mrs. Grimshaw, Dear John,	Cordially, Best regards, (British usage)

2.7 Signature 署名

The signature is the signed name or the firm which he or she represents. It is written in ink immediately under the complimentary close. To sign with a rubber stamp is a form of discourtesy. It will be all right to sign the full name. If the writer represents his company, the company's name should come first, and then the writer's signature. Under the signature, generally comes the writer's printed name for easy identification. It is preferred to add the title so that it will be convenient for the receiver to write back.

e. g.



2.8 Attention Line (Att:) 致收信人/对方经办人

If the writer wishes to direct the letter to a special person or the addressed organization, he can add an attention line; "Attention" or "Attention of". Usually, it is placed two-line spacing above the salutation, and centered over the body.

e. g. 1. Attention; Market Department (由市场部亲阅)

e. g. 2. Attention of Mr. Wang Tao

e. g. 3. For the Attention of Mr. Liuhong



2.9 Subject Line (Sub:) 主题/事由

Subject line is actually the main topic of the letter. It is inserted between the salutation and the body of the letter, underlined. The subject lines appear as follows:

e. g. Sub: Request for price lists

Usually, reference numbers and subject information are combined together to understand easily. It is expressed as “Re:” For instance, if the letter is mainly concerned with the Order No. 403364, then the subject line can be written as “Re: Your Order No. 403364”.

Dear Mr. Smith,

Sub: Request for price lists

Re: Your Order No. 403364

2.10 Reference Number (Ref:) 参考编号

Reference number is aiming to enable replies to be linked with earlier correspondence and ensure the letters reach the right person or department, which usually appears at the letterhead of the first paragraph of the reply letter. Sometimes, we use “Your ref” to indicate to which letter we reply; “Our ref” is used as the reply letter’s reference number.

e. g. Your ref: LE/x;

Our ref: BL/RP

2.11 Enclosure (Encl.) 附件

Usually, it is placed at the bottom left-hand under the identification marks with a figure indicating the number of enclosures. If something is enclosed in the letter, it is fine to use only “Enclosure”, which can be abbreviated to “Encl.” or “Enc. ”. Sometimes “Attachment” is also acceptable and also the name of the attachment can be indicated at the end of letter.

e. g. “Encl:” or “Encl(s): a catalogue and a price list” or as follows:

Enclosure(s)

Enclosure: One Copy of Invoice

Enclosures 4

Encl.

Encls.





2.12 Carbon Copy(CC) 副本抄送

It is to show that copies of the letter are sent to someone other than the recipient, usually initialed as “CC”. It stands for “Carbon Copy”. It is placed under the enclosure on the left. In addition, it's also can be marked “BCC”: Blind Carbon Copy (暗抄送).

e. g. “CC to ×××” or “CC ×××”

CC: Sales Manager

2.13 Postscript (P. S.) 附言/附笔/再启/又及

If the writer wishes to add something he forgot in the body of the letter or for the sake of emphasis, he may add a postscript two spaces below “Encl. ”. It is abbreviated as “PS”, “P. S. ”, or “PSS”.

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

2.14 Identifying Initials 辨认记号(作者姓名缩写/打字员姓名缩写)

The initials of the person who dictated the letter are in uppercase characters (大写字母) and then the initials of the person who is the secretary or typist in lowercase characters (小写字母). Two spaces are below the signature against the left margin, separated by a colon or a slant. For instance, if the letter is dictated by David Brown and typed by Eric Mark, it would be:

e. g. DB/em DB:em
DB/EM DB:EM

Sample

China National Cereals, Oils and Foodstuffs Imp & Exp Corp. 8 Jianguomen Nan Dajie Beijing 10005, China Telephone: 86-10-6526-8888 Fax: 86-10-6527-6028 E-mail: carl@cofco.com.cn		(1) Heading or Letterhead 信头
Our Ref./ Your Ref.	(10) Reference Number 参考编号	
Date: 15th November, 2015	(2) Date 日期	
Messrs H. Ronald & Co. 556 Eastcheap London, E.C. 3, England	(3) Inside Name and Address 信内地址	
<u>Att: Import Dept.</u>	(8) Attention Line 致收信人/经办人	
Dear Sirs,	(4) Salutation 称呼敬语	



<u>Aquatic Products</u>	(9) Subject Line 主题/事由
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 80%;"> <p>We thank you for your enquiry of 5 November.</p> <p>In compliance with your request, we are sending you herewith a copy of our illustrated catalogue and a quotation sheet for your reference.</p> <p>All prices are subject to our confirmation for our aquatic products have been selling well this season. Therefore, we would suggest that you advise us in case of interest.</p> <p>We await your early favorable reply.</p> </div> <div style="width: 15%; text-align: right;">(5) Body 正文</div> </div>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 50%;">Yours truly,</div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: right;">(6) Complimentary Close 结束敬语</div> </div>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 60%;"> <p>China National Cereals, Oils and Foodstuffs Imp & Exp Corp.</p> <p>Sig. <u>John Smith (Manager)</u></p> <p style="margin-top: 20px;">JS/hm</p> </div> <div style="width: 35%; text-align: right;">(7) Signature 署名</div> </div>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 50%;">Encl:</div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: right;">(11) Enclosure 附件</div> </div>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 60%;"> <p>Cc: Our Shanghai Branch Office</p> <p>P.S. We require payment by L/C for a total value not exceeding USD50,000.</p> </div> <div style="width: 35%; text-align: right;"> <p>(12) Copy Notation 抄送</p> <p>(13) Postscript 再启 (又及)</p> </div> </div>	

3. Requirements of Language Style 信函的写作要求

When you write a business letter, you should follow the 7Cs principle. They are as follows.

3.1 Completeness 完整

All necessary information and data in the message should be included because they help to get receivers' responses and achieve desired objectives. An incomplete message may result in increased communication costs, loss of goodwill, sales, and valued customers, cost of returning goods. And it takes more time to make sense out of the incomplete message.

Compare:

- a. Our Sales Manager will contact you soon.
- b. John Smith, our Sales Manager, will contact you soon. (rewriting)

Analysis: A complete letter should include whatever details are needed to generate the effect you want. Omission of anything which the receiver wants to know may cause suspicions, and may make you lose an important customer. In short, incomplete information may bring about unnecessary trouble.





3.2 Clarity 清楚

Clarity means the reader needs to know exactly what he or she wants, using words and a format that make your writings totally understood with just one reading, and avoiding using the words which have different understanding or unclear meanings. Short, familiar words and simple, short sentences rather than long, difficult words and complex, long sentences are used for this purpose. Pay attention to the rationality in logic.

Compare the followings:

① different meaning of words

- a. We have two direct sailings every month from Hong Kong to San Francisco.
- b. We have a direct sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco every two months.

② different place of modifiers

- a. We shall be able to supply 10 cases of the item only.
- b. We shall be able to supply 10 cases only of the item.

③ sentence structure

- a. We sent you 5 samples yesterday of the goods which you requested in your letter of May 25 by air. (Ambiguous)
- b. We sent you, by air, 5 samples of the goods yesterday which you requested in your letter of May 25. (Clarity)

3.3 Correctness 正确

Correctness not only refers to the correct grammar rules, contents, and forms, but also accuracy in style, language and typing.

① mistakes with grammar

- a. with pronouns

Our competitors' prices are 2%~3% lower than *us* (ours)

- b. with verbs

It is one of the machines that *was* (were) delivered last week.

- c. with conjunctions

This handcraft *not only is attractive* (is attractive not only) in proper price, but also in good quality.

- d. with subjects

While studying the report, telephone rang.

While I was studying the report, the telephone rang. (rewriting)

Depositing money with us, our bank can pay you high dividends.



Depositing money with us, you earn high dividends. (rewriting)

② mistakes with tone can be avoided by using the following techniques:

- Place more emphasis on the reader than yourself;
- Avoid extreme cases of humility, flattery, and modesty.

Compare the followings:

- a. We are well-established exporters of all kinds of goods made in Switzerland.
- b. We are well-established exporters of Swiss sundry goods, such as toys, buttons and stationary. (rewriting)

③ using accurate figures

- 5% up to 10% both inclusive
- from the 1st to 15th of March both inclusive
- for 5 days exclusive of the day of dispatch
- for 15 days exclusive of Sundays
- £445.00 (Four Hundred and Forty-five Pounds only)
- £15.01 (Fifteen Pounds and One Penny)
- \$450.00 (US Dollars Four Hundred and Fifty only)
- 1/4" (pipe measuring 1/4 inch)
- 120sq. ft (120 square feet)
- 40c. ft (40 cubic feet)
- 28" * 30yds (28 inches in width, 30 yards in length)

④ using accurate capitalized letter

- "Great Wall" Electric Fan
- Catalogue E-35 (第 E-35 号产品目录)
- Order No. 26 (第 26 号订单)
- the S. S. "Merry Captain" ("快乐船长"号货轮)
- the S. S. "Lucky Prince" ("幸运王子"号货轮)
- the M. V. "Silver River" ("银河"号货轮)

3.4 Conciseness 简洁

Conciseness is often considered to be the most important writing principle and language feature. Conciseness also means you should clearly express what you would do in a short and pithy style of writing as possible as you can.

Follow the principle: KISS—keep it short and simple to the point in writing business letters.





- ① Avoid using wordy expressions;
- ② Avoid unnecessary repetition;
- ③ Using short sentences, simple words and clear explanations

Compare:

a. using words instead of phrases

e. g. enclosed herewith	enclosed (rewriting)
at this time	now (rewriting)
due to the fact that	because (rewriting)

b. using phrases instead of sentences

- e. g.1. Please don't hesitate to call upon us.
Please write to us. (rewriting)
- e. g.2. Please see that an enquiry is conducted to determine the reason.
Please find out the reason. (rewriting)

c. using vocabulary instead of clause

- e. g.1. We require a full-automatic washing machine which is of the new type.
- e. g.2. We require a new type of full automatic washing machine. (rewriting)

- ④ Avoid the out-of-date commercial jargons and try to use modern English.

• **Out of date commercial jargons:**

to the fact that 由于……的事实

Terminate 结束

Attached hereto 随函附上

Acknowledge receipt of 确认收到

Inst. 本月

Up to this writing 在写这封信的时候

Modern English

As, because or since

End

Enclosed is/are

Thank you for... I received...

This month

So far

Compare:

- a. The letter you wrote on the first day of the month of May has been received with many thanks.
- b. Thank you for your letter of May 1. (rewriting)

3.5 Concreteness 具体

Make the message specific, definite and vivid rather than vague, general and abstract, especially when you are requiring a response, solving problems, making an offer or acceptance, etc..



- Pay attention to the following tips:

Complete with the 6W's: Who? What? Why? How? Where? When?

Concreteness in action: using specific words to make our information more concrete and convincing;

Using concrete words.

Compare the followings:

- a. We have drawn on you as usual under your L/C.

We have drawn on you our sight draft No. 845 for the invoice amount, US \$ 56,000, under your L/C No. 246 of the China Bank. (rewriting)

- b. We have already received your invoices No. 123 and 456 and will make payment shortly.

We have already received your invoices No. 123 and 456 and will make payment on or before Nov. 25. (rewriting)

3.6 Courtesy 礼貌

Courtesy means treating people with respect and friendly human concern. In order to make a business letter courteous, try to avoid using irritating, offensive, or belittling statements. To answer letters promptly also shows courtesy. Rules listed below should be followed:

- Change the commanding tone into requesting tone;
- Use mitigation and avoid overemphasizing your own opinion or irritating your partner;
- Passive voice should be adopted accordingly;
- Try to avoid using the word with forcing tone or arousing unpleasantness;
- Use expressions about joy and willingness, thanks and regret, etc..

Compare the following sentences:

- a. You can make shipment a little later, that is, by June 10.
- b. You might make shipment a little later, that is, by June 10.

3.7 Consideration 体谅

Consideration means thoughtfulness.

Consideration emphasizes You-attitude rather than We-attitude. You-attitude sentences and letters show more respect and consideration for the other party. You-attitude means that you are from the other party's view and put his/her interests in the first place.





We-attitude is self-centered. Use positive tone instead of negative tone. Sentences and letters with positive tones are more easily accepted than those with negative tones though they convey almost the same message.

Compare the following two sentences:

- 1a. We allow a 5% discount for cash payments. (we-attitude)
- 1b. You earn a 5% discount when you pay cash. (you-attitude)
- 2a. We regret our inability to serve you at this time. (negative tone)
- 2b. Perhaps next time we can send you what you require. (positive tone)

Focus Words & Phrases

1. **salutation** 称呼敬语
2. **comma** 逗号
3. **notation** 标记法; 记号, 标志
4. **addressee** 收信人; 收件人
5. **confidential**(机密), **private**(私函), **personal**(亲收), **urgent/immediate**(急件), **registered** (挂号邮件), **express**(快递邮件), **ordinary Mail**(平信), **sample**(样品), **printed matters** (印刷品), **par avion / by air**(航空)
有些书信用“C/O”: *in care of* (由……转交),
e. g. Mr. Bush C/O Mr. President Obama (由奥巴马总统转交给布什先生).
6. **Yours faithfully, / Yours sincerely**, 谨上
7. **bimonthly** 每月两次, 每两个月一次

Specialized Expressions

商业英文书信中所使用的词语

(1) 贵函

Your letter; Your favor; Your esteemed letter; Your esteemed favor; Your valued letter; Your valued favor; Your note; Your communication; Your greatly esteemed letter; Your friendly advice

(2) 本信, 本函

Our (my) letter; Our (my) respects; Ours (mine); This letter; The present



(3) 前函

The last letter; The last mail; The last post; The last communication; The last respects(自己的信); The last favor(上次来信)

(4) 次函

The next letter; The next mail; The next communication; The letter following; The following

(5) 贵函发出日期

Your letter of (the) 5th May; Your favor dated (the) 5th June; Yours of the 3rd July; Yours under date (of) the 5th July; Your letter bearing date 5th July; Your favor of even date(AE); Your letter of yesterday; Your favor of yesterday's date; Your letter dated yesterday

(6) 贵方来电、电传及传真

Your telegram; Your wire; Your cablegram; Your coded wire(密码电报); Your code message; Your cipher telegram; Your wireless telegram; Your TELEX; Your Fax

(7) 贵方电话

Your telephone message; Your phone message; Your telephonic communication; Your telephone call; Your ring

(8) 通知

(Noun)

Advice; Notice; Information; Notification; Communication; A report; News; Message

(Verb)

To communicate (a fact) to; To report (a fact) to... on; To apprise (a person) of; To let (a person) know; To acquaint (a person) with; To intimate (a fact) to; To send word; To send a message; To mail a notice; To write (a person) information; To give notice(预告); To break the news to(通知坏消息)

(9) 回信

(Noun)

An answer; A reply; A response

(Verb)

To answer; To reply; To give a reply; To give one's answer; To make an answer; To send an answer; To write in reply; To answer one's letter

(特此回信)

Reply to; Answering to; In answer to; In reply to; In response to





(等候回信)

To await an answer; To wait for an answer

(收到回信)

To get an answer; To favor one with an answer; To get a letter answered

(10) 收讫, 收到

(Noun)

Receipt

(Verb)

To receive; To be in receipt of; To be in hand; To come to hand; To be in positions of; To be favored with; To get; To have; To have before (a person); To make out a receipt(开出收据); To acknowledge receipt(告知收讫)

(11) 确认

To confirm; Confirming; Confirmation; In Confirmation of

(12) 高兴, 愉快, 欣慰

To have the pleasure to do; To have the pleasure of doing; To have pleasure in (of) doing; To take (a) pleasure in doing (something); To take pleasure in doing (something); To be pleased to (with)(by); to be delighted at (in)(with); To be glad to (of)(about)

(13) 随函附件

Enclose



Exercises

I . Please correct the mistakes in the following letter according to the blocked form and separate the message into two paragraphs.

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES CO.

P. O. Box 3259

××××, ×××

The Manager

Messrs. Clarke &. Smith Co. Ltd.

68 High Street

London EC 4

England

22th January, 2016



Dear Sirs,

We thank your letter of 17th January, asking us details and prices of our electric heaters. We are pleasure in enclosing our latest price list and catalogue, together with Model X-4's details. Please do not reluctant to write when you require further information, which shall always have our best attention.

Yours faithfully,
Electrical Appliances Co. Ltd.
Manager

II. Situational writing.

Arrange the following in proper form as they should be set out in a letter.

- (1) Sender's name: China National Chemicals Imp. & Exp. Corporation
- (2) Sender's address: Xijiao, Beijing, China
- (3) Date: August 18, 2016
- (4) Receiver's name: Messrs. J. Brown & Co.
- (5) Receiver's address: 143 Eastcheap, London E. C. 3
- (6) Salutation: Dear Sirs,
- (7) Subject-line: Shipping Documents
- (8) The message:

We are sending you under separate cover a full set of non-negotiable copies of shipping documents per s. s PEACE.

We hope that you will find everything in good order.

- (9) Complimentary close used: Yours faithfully,
- (10) The signature: China National Chemicals Imp. & Exp. Corporation, Manager
Wang Wei

