

# Unit 1 Form of Business Letters



## Learning Objectives

- 1) Remember the principles of a good business letter;
- 2) Familiar with the structure of a business letter;
- 3) Choose a standard format you like most in your future letter, don't mix;
- 4) Address a correct envelope or air waybill when you send a letter.



## Mini-case

### 【A Letter from a Partner】

Your client, Forward Bicycles Co., Ltd. intends to buy your “Dove” bicycles. The sales manager wrote a letter saying that he would like to do this business on a D/P basis, which is unacceptable to you. Your usual term of payment is L/C. However, he is a long-term trade partner with good credit. How would you reply to his letter?

### 【Analysis】

Writing a good business letter is not an easy job. It needs a lot of professional background with a perfect communication skill. Under such circumstance, you should balance the policy of your company with the business relation. Whether to do business on L/C basis or not, you should reply in a courteous and reasonable way.

## Part 1 The Introduction of Business Letters

Business letters are written in formal style between business organizations and customers to get or convey business information, to make or accept an offer, to deal with various businesses.

Nowadays, with the rapid economical development, China's position on the international stage is getting more and more important. When foreign trade is booming and foreign-related economic activities are increasing frequently, English for Business Correspondence is using in more and more areas, such as establishing business relations, enquiries, offers, contracts, packing, shipment, insurance and so on, which could be sent by letter, telegram, telex, fax and e-mail.

It is taken for granted that the language in business letters belongs to English for Specific Purpose (ESP). Because English for Business Correspondence is a combination of business knowledge and English, it has distinct industrial features and a unique style. It is made up of three elements: background knowledge of business, language in business settings and business communication skills. English in background knowledge of business involves the capability of word, sentence, section, pronunciation and intonation. Language in particular circumstances lies on the rest elements. The contents of business decide the specialized vocabulary while business communication skills decide the sentence pattern, section structure, style, intonation and language rhythm changes.

As one of the ESP courses, English for Business Correspondence has its special linguistic and stylistic features. The purpose for Business Correspondence is in English writing. To write a good or bad business letter depends on whether the writer has controlled the natures of this language or not. A good business letter can play an important role in trade, enhance mutual understanding and trust, and strengthen exchange and cooperation.

So before you start to learn this course, you'd better master some knowledge, especially for practice in foreign trade and higher standards English. You should know well some principles for a good business letter as follows.

## **Part 2 The Principles for Good Business Letters**

Different from a private letter, a good business letter should have a definite subject, concise contents and completely easy understanding expressions between each other. Generally speaking, there are 7C-principles you'd better learn by heart in writing a business letter.

### **1. Courtesy**

It's important to show courtesy in all business activities, especially when trying to enter into a relationship with a new customer. The language you use should be polite and modest. Reply timely is another polite manner. To show courtesy, one should follow closely and tactfully the following suggestions:

1) To show sincere politeness and heartfelt respect.

2) To be considerate understanding.

3) To avoid irritating, offensive or belittling statements. Reduce negative sentences, for negative tends to have negative consequences.

4) To reply in a prompt way. If you answer late, you should give a strong and understandable reason.

5) To be very careful when expressing regretful or upset words if it is absolutely necessary.

Please compare the following sentences, for "A" is better than "B".

A. We have received with many thanks your letter of ..., and we take the pleasure of sending you our latest catalogue. We wish to draw your attention to a special offer.

B. You will be particularly interested in a special offer on page 5 of the latest catalogue enclosed, which you requested in your letter of ...

A. We are sorry not to make ourselves clear.

B. We are sorry you have misunderstood us.

A. If your price could be lower, we will bear it.

B. Your price is too high. We can't bear it.

## 2. Consideration

To create a good impression, you would adjust your words according to the demands, interests, difficulties and other information of the other part. Try to put yourself in his or her place. To emphasize "you-attitude" rather than "we-attitude" is more respectful for each other.

When you are writing, you should not only know well his or her culture background, but also the position, a potential customer or an old customer. Then the proper languages will be used accordingly to create a harmonious atmosphere and reach a best communication effect.

Please compare the following sentences, for "A" is better than "B".

A. You will earn 2 percent discount if you pay in cash.

B. We will allow 2 percent discount for cash payment.

A. We will send you the latest brochure next month.

B. We won't be able to send you the latest brochure this month.

## 3. Completeness

A business letter should cover every essential matter, for example, an invitation letter should state the time, place and so on, and avoid vague expressions. When you are writing, "5W1H" is always as an outline. And before sending out your letter, you'd better double check whether you answer in full, whether the reasons are enough to support the fact, who will receive the letter. Incompleteness will not only show your unprofessional work, but also lead to the recipient's unfavourable impression to your firm. Sometimes it might cramp the trade procession.

## 4. Clearness

Clearness or clarity is an important rule of a good business letter. A good letter should make readers understand fully at one glance without words or expressions to be misunderstood. So after determining what to write, you'd better carefully choose some straight-forward, familiar and colloquial words, to build simple and effective sentences and paragraphs to make your idea clear. Try to avoid vague and ambiguous words. If necessary, you can use some samples, illustrations, and other things to help readers understand visually. Please pay attention to the following suggestions:

1) To avoid misused words.

E.g. As to the steamers sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco, we have bimonthly direct services.

“Bimonthly” means twice a month or once two month. So you should write more directly as “We have two direct sailings every month from Hong Kong to San Francisco.” Or “We have semimonthly direct sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco.” Or “We have a direct sailing from Hong Kong to San Francisco.”

2) To note the word position.

E.g. “We shall be able to supply 10 cases of the item only.” may imply two items or above involved. So you should write “We shall be able to supply 10 cases only of the item.”

3) To note the sentence structure.

E.g. “We sent you 5 samples yesterday of the goods which you requested in your letter of May 20 by air.” is more difficult to read than “We sent you, by air, 5 samples of the goods which you requested in your letter of May 20.”

## 5. Conciseness

Conciseness means not only to convey the expression meaning simply, but also not to sacrifice completeness or courtesy. A good business letter should be precise and to the point. When you are writing to achieve this goal, you should give up those old trade terms firstly. Then you should avoid wordy languages, delete those redundancy, repetition and excessive sentences, try to keep your message effective and concise. After that, the most important message would be presented to the reader. Please pay attention to the following guidelines:

1) To avoid multiply words.

① “We wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter...” could be revised as “We appreciate your letter...”

② “Enclosed herewith please find two copies of...” could be revised as “We enclose two copies of...”

2) To avoid unnecessary repetition.

3) To use short sentences and simple words. Please compare the following words, for the right side is better than the left.

enclosed herewith	enclosed
at this time	now
due to the fact that	because

## 6. Concreteness

Business letters must be written in vivid, clear and concrete instead of vague, general and abstract words and statements. Especially for letters calling for a specific reply, such as offers and trade terms etc., concreteness is always stressed. It's a common way to use specific facts and figures, select vivid and image-building words and sentences. And prefer active verbs to passive verbs.

For example, when you talk about time, it's better to give specific time with day, month, year and

even hour if necessary. We should avoid words like short or long while we describe the quality of a good. Exact figures and facts are better. Please compare the following sentences:

- A. We will send the samples to you before Jun 6.
- B. We will send the samples to you as soon as possible.

## 7. Correctness

Business letters must be written correctly because they could involve the rights, interests and obligations of both sides. In particular, business letters are usually regarded as a proof of commercial document. They are often as the base of all kinds of documents, such as commercial invoices, sales contracts.

A correct letter should be written in a proper form, not only showing the correct vocabulary and grammar, proper spelling and punctuation, but also the correct descriptions, factual information, accurate data, standard writing form and exact trade terms. And obviously the latter will cost you more time to learn better.

## Part 3 The Structure of Business Letters

The basic structure of a business letter may include the main parts and the optional parts. The main parts refer to those parts are used in each kind of business letter frequently, the optional parts means that they may appear in particular cases or seldom be used today.

The main parts include: Letterhead/Heading, Date/Dateline, Salutation, Body of the Letter, Complimentary Close, Signature.

The optional parts include: Inside name and address, Attention line, Subject line, Reference Number, Enclosure, Carbon copy, Postscript.

### 1. The Main Parts

#### 1.1 Letterhead/Heading

A formal business letter should have a letterhead which is always the same as the other commercial documents. In terms of common formats, letterhead is usually artistically designed and printed in the center or on the left margin at the top of the first page. It contains the information of writer, such as the company's name, address, postcode, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and web site etc. Some companies like to print their logos to show their individualities and leave readers a favorable impression.

- 1) Shanghai Knitwear Imp. & Exp. co., Ltd.

Floor 3 Guangzhou Building No.2 East Yanan Road, Shanghai 200003, China

Tel: 86-21-63592640 Fax: 86-21-63597168 [www.shknit.com](http://www.shknit.com)

2) Olivier & co., ltd.

PO Box 1728, Osborne Park, WA, 6913, Australia

P +61 8 9445 0335 F +61 8 9445 0392 [www.olivier.com](http://www.olivier.com)

## 1.2 Date/Dateline

Date plays a vital role in a business letter. It may serve as an important reference of a transaction, especially when a complaint or dispute arises. For example, on FOB basis, if the exporter finishes his cargo, he will notice the importer as soon as possible for the other side to prepare vessel and effect insurance. The date of letter will show whether the shipping advice is in due time.

There are three key points about date writing as follows.

First, use the standard or common form which is in order of month/day/year, e.g. November 18, 2013. Secondly, avoid using ordinal suffixes (-st, -nd, -rd, -th) in order of day/month/year, which seems not only stiff but also out of fashion. Thirdly, please never use abbreviations, hyphens, and diagonals, e.g. 12-12-13, 2/2/13, which may cause some confusion.

## 1.3 Salutation

The salutation is used as a respectful form of address. It should be typed two lines below the dateline or the inside address and the reference number, flush with the left margin, and match the name on the envelope. There are many kinds in business letters as follows:

1) If the receiver you don't know well, the customary formal greeting would be "Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam". If you are addressing your letter to a company, "Dear Sirs" is a better choice.

2) Usually, you write to a person you already have his or her name, especially in a reply letter. For example, if his full name is Paul Williams, you could write "Dear Mr. Williams" as a formal way. You write "Dear Paul" to a man you are familiar with, which is less formal.

In business letters, if you write to a lady, "Ms." is as the courtesy title for the all regardless of marital status. In addition, when you receive a letter, please pay attention to his or her signature. Someone prefers his or her official, political and academic position, and you could reply accordingly, such as "Dr. Williams".

## 1.4 Body of the Letter

The body of the letter should begin two lines below the salutation or the subject line. It's the core of the letter which could not only convey the business information, but also leave an impression on the reader. So how to arrange it needs more carefully planned as follows:

1) Don't write in only one paragraph, especially for the message covering several topics. It's better to write in some short paragraphs to distinguish each topic and make your message clear and fast read. Regardless of the style, skip a line between paragraphs. Skip a line between the greeting and the body. Skip a line between the body and the close.

2) Keep your paragraphs in a logical order. Usually, the first paragraph refers to the previous correspondence, such as the date of the letter you are replying. The middle could contain one or more paragraphs covering the specific issues remained to be settled. The last paragraph refers to the next step

for business conclusion, and gives a favorable wish.

3) It's important to use conventional language. The commercial jargons could only be used between the experts, otherwise they would confuse laymen.

4) Try to keep your letter in one page. More details could be as enclosures.

### 1.5 Complimentary Close

The complimentary close is just a polite way to end a letter. Today, when the letter is sending by e-mail, it's usually designed as part of one's signature, which could appear to the recipients automatically. However, it's absolutely necessary for a business letter. And the expression for the complimentary close should be in accordance with the salutation.

	Salutation	Complimentary close
Formal	Dear Sir/Madam	Yours faithfully/Faithfully yours Yours truly/Truly yours
Informal	Dear Paul	Yours sincerely/Sincerely yours Best wishes

If you are not very sure about the relationship between each other, formal way is always a better choice for the salutation and complimentary close.

### 1.6 Signature

The signature is related to the legal authority especially for the letter about quotations, offers, orders and contracts and so on. The signature in a printed letter should start directly above the first letter of the signature line in the space between the close and the signature line. Use blue or black ink.

E.g.

Sincerely, (Signature goes here)

(Mrs.) Elisabeth Jackson

Director of Acquisitions

When sending letter by e-mail, the signature is always set automatically by the writer to save time and avoid mistakes.

## 2. The Optional Parts

### 2.1 Inside Name and Address

The inside name and address is always in a formal printed letter to show the writer's respect. This part contains the name, address, zip code of the company or the one to whom you are writing, which is the same as that on the envelope. It is usually typed in the left margin and two lines below the dateline. When the receiver is a company, you could see the following example:

E.g. Olivier & co., Ltd.

PO Box 1728

Osborne Park, WA, 6913

Australia

When the receiver is an individual in the company, the person's name should be preceded by the courtesy title as "Mr., Mrs. and Ms.". Sometimes his or her position follows the name.

E.g. Mr. Williams

Sales Manager

Olivier & co., ltd.

PO Box 1728

Osborne Park, WA, 6913

Australia

## 2.2 Attention Line

The attention line just follows the inside name and address in the left margin usually. It could mention a specific person or a department when the addressee is a company.

E.g. Western Utilities, Inc.

3945 Freedom Cir., Suite 600

Santa Clara, CA 95054

United States

Attention: Import Dept.

Dear Mr. Williams,

...

## 2.3 Subject Line

The subject line always appears in business letters to indicate the reader what the letter is mainly about. It's very helpful for the reader to separate one from another if the correspondence covering more issues, and also it's easy for filing. Usually, only a very short phrase is needed, such as the type of product, L/C number and sales contract number. It is typed two lines below the salutation.

E.g. Re: Computer type ABC, Your L/C No. KW-1050

If a letter send by e-mail, you will follow the format of e-mail and fill it in the proper blank.

## 2.4 Reference Number

The reference number is usually made out by the writer for filing. It's typed in one place to be easily seen. Often it's placed two lines below the letterhead or at the end of a letter in the left margin two lines below the signature.

Also the number is designed as the rule of each company. When giving the reference number of a previous letter, to which the present letter as a reply, one should follow the date of the early letter for careful consideration.

## 2.5 Enclosure

If there is an attachment with the business letter, such as price list, catalogue and so on, the enclosure notation will be added to the letter. It is typed two lines below the signature in the left margin,



as “Enclosure” or its abbreviation “Enc.” or “Encl.” with the number of the enclosure or its details.

E.g. Encl. Price List

If a letter is sent by e-mail, you will not type the above at the end of the letter. However you should remind your reader to pay attention to your enclosures in the body of the letter.

## 2.6 Carbon Copy

Besides sending to the reader, sometimes the copy of the letter will be sent to two or more people for their reference, because some cases need a team-work, or the writer likes to expand influence of the letter.

Carbon copy, its abbreviation “C.C.” or “CC”, usually is typed two lines below the signature in the left margin. In e-mail writing, carbon copy has its own blank.

## 2.7 Postscript

Postscript is often used in the era of typewriter. When a letter is finished typing, it’s harder to be revised or retyped. If something important you need to add to this letter, writing the “P.S.” is a method to save the situation. It’s placed two lines below any other notations in the left margin. The message followed “P.S.” should be very short, at least not longer than its body.

Today, in the era of computer, postscript is hardly seen in the business letter. For “P.S.” would imply the writer unprofessional. When people realize something has been forgotten before sending the letter, he or she could retype it easily.

# Part 4 The Layout of Business Letters

Several styles for business letter writing are usually acceptable. They are full-block format, semi-block format and modified block format. Each format has it’s natures and could not be mixed.

## 1. The Full-Block Format

The full-block format is a more popular business style for it’s easier to remember, especially for facilitating modern office habit.

Letterhead

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Inside Name and Address

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Salutation

<u>Subject Line</u>
<u>Body</u> _____ _____
<u>Complimentary Close</u>
<u>Signature</u>

## 2. The Semi-Block Format

The semi-block format is a more traditional style. Usually a formal printed letter is in this style, such as an official invitation letter.

<u>Letterhead</u> _____ _____	<u>Date</u>
<u>Inside Name and Address</u> _____ _____	
<u>Salutation</u>	
<u>Subject Line</u>	
<u>Body</u> _____ _____	
	<u>Complimentary Close</u>
	<u>Signature</u>

## 3. The Modified Block Format

The modified block format is another popular style. When this format is used, the body of letter is blocked.

<u>Letterhead</u> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/>	<u>Date</u>
<u>Inside Name and Address</u> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/>	
<u>Salutation</u>	
<u>Subject Line</u>	
<u>Body</u> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 10px 0;"/> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 10px 0;"/>	
	<u>Complimentary Close</u>
	<u>Signature</u>

#### 4. Specimen Letter

The following letter is in full-block format.

China National Light Industrial Products Imp. & Exp. Corporation 980 Dongfang Road, Pudong New Area, Shanghai 200122, China Tel: 021-68751280 Fax: 021-68751289	Letterhead
Ref. BG 6725	Reference Number
July 1, 2014	Date
Pacific Trading Company Ltd. 26/F Tower One, Times Square 1 Matheson Street, Causeway Bay Hong Kong	Inside Name and Address
Dear Mr. Hagan,	Salutation
Re: <u>Parts for Machine Type B-114</u>	Subject
We purchased from you ten sets of the captioned machine in 2012. The machines have been very satisfactory.	Body of the Letter

However, at present we need a large quantity of accessories as per the enclosed list. Please send us as soon as possible your pro-forma invoice by fax and hard copy in quadruplicate by airmail. You are kindly requested to quote the FOB Hong Kong rate.	
The parts and accessories are urgently needed so we wish to receive your pro-forma invoice by return fax for export license.	
Sincerely yours,	Complimentary Close
Wang Liming Manager	Signature
Encl.: a copy of inquiry list.	Enclosure

## Part 5 The Envelope of Business Letters

It's important to type address correctly and clearly on the envelope when you send a business letter by post. A good appearance is not only a guarantee to reach the recipient on time, but also a good expression to show your professional standard.

The name and address of recipient and sender will be both typed on the envelope. The recipient's should be typed about half way down the envelope and the sender's should be placed at the left corner above the envelope. The name and address of recipient should be the same as that inside of your letter. It's better to type the name of recipient, otherwise your letter would be neglected in the end. The sender's on the envelope should be the same as the letterhead. If you like writing by hand, please use black or blue ink.

Sometimes post notations such as registered, confidential, by air mail, sample of no value, private and urgent etc. should be typed in the bottom left-hand corner.

There are two popular formats, block and indented format for your reference as follows:

### 1. The Block Format

China National Light Industrial Products Imp. & Exp. Corporation 980 Dongfang Road, Pudong New Area, Shanghai 200122, China	<b>Stamp</b>
	Mr. Hagan Pacific Trading Company Ltd. 26/F Tower One, Times Square 1 Matheson Street, Causeway Bay Hong Kong
<i>By air mail and Registered</i>	

## 2. The Indented Format

<p>China National Light Industrial Products Imp. &amp; Exp. Corporation          980 Dongfang Road,          Pudong New Area,          Shanghai 200122,          China</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">Stamp</div>
<p>By air mail and Registered</p>	<p>Mr. Hagan          Pacific Trading Company Ltd.          26/F Tower One, Times Square          1 Matheson Street, Causeway Bay          Hong Kong</p>

If you send the letter by express, you should fill an air waybill and follow the rules of the express company.

## Part 6 Useful Words, Phrases and Sentences

### 1. Vocabulary

abbreviation	n. 缩写词或略语
diagonal	n. 对角线; 斜线; 斜列
layout	n. 安排; 布局; 设计
format	n. 版式; 设计 vt. 使格式化; 安排
file	n. 档案; 卷宗; 文件 vt. 把……归档
margin	n. 页边空白; 边缘; 幅度; 利润
intonation	n. 语调; 声调
vague	adj. 不明确的; 模糊的
flush	v. 使齐平; 冲洗
illustration	n. 说明; 插图; 图解
professional	adj. 职业的; 专业的; 专门的
complimentary	adj. 问候的; 称赞的
colloquial	adj. 口语的; 会话的
register	v. 登记; 记录; 注册; 挂号
addressee	n. 收信人
addressor	n. 发信人

item	n. 项目; 条款; 一件商品 (或物品)
accessory	n. 附件; 配件

## 2. Phrases and Expressions

block form	齐头式; 并列式
indented form	缩头式
language rhythm	语言节奏
double check	仔细检查; 反复察看
pay attention to	注意; 留意
trade terms	贸易术语
industrial feature	行业特征
as per	按照; 根据
pro-forma invoice	形式发票
in quadruplicate	一式四份
export license	出口许可证
price list	价目表

## 3. Vocabulary Explanation

1)	correspondence	n.	通信; 信件; 相符, 相似; 一致, 相当
	correspond	v.	符合; 对应; 通信
	correspondent	n.	通讯记者; 通信者
		adj.	与……一致的; 相应的

**E.g.** As her private secretary, he has access to all her **correspondence**.

I've got through a lot of **correspondence** today.

I **correspond** with him regularly.

These goods don't **correspond** with my order.

The broad lines on the map **correspond** to roads.

The result was **correspondent** with my wishes.

The information below was compiled by our **correspondent**.

**letter, note, correspondence, message** 都有“信”的意思:

**letter** 为最普通用词, 泛指一切形式的书信, 尤指邮寄的信;

**note** 指内容直截了当的短信或便条, 正式或非正式均可;

**correspondence** 是集合名词, 指全部来往信件;

**message** 指书信、口信、电报等。

2)	customer	n.	顾客; 主顾
	customs	n.	海关

**E.g.** She's rather a tricky **customer** to do business with.

These goods enjoy growing favor among the **customers**.

To save **customers'** time, they began a delivery service.

The drinks were produced in response to **customers** demand.

For years he has been smuggling watches through **customs**.

How long does it take to get through **customs**?

Here's your receipt. You are through with the **customs** formality.

**customer, client, consumer** 都有“客户”的意思:

**customer** 指购买货物或享受服务的人;

**client** 的使用范围更广一些, 使用的场合也比较正式;

**consumer** 指为直接使用或拥有而不是为再次卖出去或用于生产制造而获取商品或服务的人。

3)	deal with	讨论; 处理, 对付; 涉及; 与……做生意
	deal in	经营; 买卖

**E.g.** We have no space to **deal with** such details.

I think we should work out a strategy to **deal with** this situation.

He was a difficult man to **deal with**.

In **dealing with** the problem he was cautious to an extreme.

We **deal in** a great variety of items.

The merchant **deals in** wool and cotton.

**deal with, cope with, dispose of, manage, handle** 都有“处理、对付”的意思:

**deal with** 既可指处理具体事情, 也可指处理或解决具有抽象意义的问题;

**cope with** 指成功地处理或对付更为重大、更为严重的问题或事物;

**dispose of** 与 deal with 同义, 普通用法;

**manage** 指处理日常事务与工作, 也可指经营管理;

**handle** 从原义“手柄”引申为“处理”时, 其内涵是管理和操纵。

4)	concise	adj.	简明的; 简要的
	conciseness	n.	简洁; 简明

**E.g.** His article is **concise** and comprehensive.

He gave a **concise** and firm summary of our position.

Generally speaking, you will gain in clearness and **conciseness** by writing short sentences rather than long ones.

**Conciseness** needs to include any information that is to the point, but to leave out those statements that do not bear on the subject.

**brief, concise, compact** 都有“简短的、简洁的”的意思:

**brief** 指语言文学简明扼要, 短小精悍, 也用于指时间意义很强的短暂的过程;

**concise** 为书面用词，可与 **brief** 换用，指语言文学言简意赅，无多余的话；  
**compact** 指为了方便把某物压缩到最小程度，也指紧凑、简洁的文体。

5)	subject	n.	话题；主题
		adj.	易患的；服从的
		vt.	使服从；使隶属；使遭遇

**E.g.** He posed as an authority on that **subject**.

The **subject** remains untouched upon.

I need your cooperation in this **subject**.

The price is **subject** to our confirmation.

The price is **subject** to change without notice.

Our plans are **subject** to the weather.

This country was once **subjected** to foreign rule.

Ancient Rome **subjected** most of Europe.

**issue, subject, theme, topic** 都有“主题、话题”的意思：

**issue** 指急需讨论研究的热点话题；

**subject** 为一般用词，使用广泛，通常指书籍、文章、演讲、讨论等所隐含的、暗示的，需要由读者或听众推断的主题或中心话题；

**theme** 为正式用词，多指文学、艺术作品的主题，或论文、演说的主题；

**topic** 为普通用词，含义广泛，但其范畴小于 **subject**，既可指文章、讲话的题目，谈话的内容，又可指提纲中的标题甚至段落的主题或中心思想。

6)	interest	n.	利息；兴趣；嗜好；股份
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**E.g.** Do you pay **interest** on that account?

How much **interest** do they charge on loans?

**Interest** rates are running at record levels.

The sum was paid back to the bank with **interest**.

**interest, advantage, benefit, profit** 都有“利益”的意思：

**interest** 多用于表示一些抽象的如“投资”这样的权益，或指应付的“利息”；

**advantage** 一般不用于表示所获得的物质利益；

**benefit** 既可指具体利益，也可指抽象事物上的收获或帮助；

**profit** 通常只用于表示具体利益，偶尔用于抽象事物，如权力或知识的增长等。

## Summary

In this unit, we have discussed the principles of a good business letter. The 7c-principles need you practice more and more in your future study. And the more popular formats of letter and envelope have been introduced. You could choose one of them and get familiar with them in your own letters.



## The Key Words and Phrases Discussed in the Unit

7c-principles, format, letter, envelope

### Part 7 Exercises

#### 1. Choose the best answer.

1) We can \_\_\_\_\_ that shipment will be made in due time.

- A. assure      B. ensure you      C. sure      D. ensure

2) As to terms of payment, we often require a confirmed and irrevocable L/C \_\_\_\_\_ by draft at sight.

- A. available      B. acceptable      C. revocable      D. desirable

3) As stipulated in the sales contract, you are required to \_\_\_\_\_ an irrevocable letter of credit in our favor.

- A. draw      B. make      C. establish      D. develop

4) We have been happy to \_\_\_\_\_ you credit based on your promise to pay according to our terms.

- A. amend      B. extend      C. open      D. expand

5) We are pleased to inform you that the item you required can be supplied \_\_\_\_\_ stock.

- A. in      B. on      C. out      D. from

6) You are recommended to us \_\_\_\_\_ a large buyer of textiles by one of our clients.

- A. as      B. of      C. for      D. with

7) Extra premium is for the buyer's account, \_\_\_\_\_ additional risks be covered.

- A. if      B. when      C. should      D. could

8) We are not able to accept fresh orders because of heavy \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. commissions      B. commitments  
C. communications      D. communities

9) We thank you for your letter of June 5 and the \_\_\_\_\_ catalogue.

- A. sent      B. enclosed      C. given      D. presented

10) They have \_\_\_\_\_ us that you are \_\_\_\_\_ the market \_\_\_\_\_ chemicals.

- A. inform, in, on      B. informed, in, for  
C. advise, in, on      D. advised, in, of

#### 2. Translate the following sentences into Chinese.

1) We are enclosing our pro-forma invoice in triplicate for your applying for the necessary import license.

- 2) The manufacturers insist that there is no valid ground for your complaint.
- 3) The depressed market results in the stagnation of trade.
- 4) FPA coverage is too narrow for a shipment of this nature, please extend it to include TPND.
- 5) Provided you fulfill the terms of the credit, we will accept and pay on maturity the draft presented to us under this credit.
- 6) Please inform us one week before the shipment of the name of the vessel, ETA and loading capacity.
- 7) You may be assured that we will carefully and seriously carry out your order sheet to your entire satisfaction.
- 8) The remittance is in payment of all commissions due to you up to date.
- 9) The goods are to be shipped in two lots of 100 metric tons, each on separate Bill of Lading.
- 10) When doing business with foreign dealers, we adhere to the principle of equality and mutual benefit.

### 3. Translate the following sentences into English.

- 1) 请邮寄给我一份贵公司目前可供出口的各式微波炉的最新价目单。
- 2) 由于最近原材料成本的上涨，我们无法降低价格。
- 3) 除非你们找一家有信誉的公司担保，否则我们不接受用承兑交单付款。
- 4) 我们认为供应商要对短量负责，因为破包是由于包装不良引起的。
- 5) 根据合同规定，唛头应由买方选定。
- 6) 我们希望在互利的基础上与你们建立业务关系。
- 7) 要求信用证在装船前 30 天开到卖方，装船后 15 天内在卖方所在国的任何银行议付有效。
- 8) 我们报 300 公吨核桃实盘，每公吨欧洲主要港口到岸价 580 美元，9 月交货。
- 9) 由于从上海到你们港口没有直达航班，货物要在香港转船。
- 10) 关于保险，按发票金额 110%投保到目的港。

### 4. Fill in the blanks with proper words.

Dear Sir,

In your letter of December 3, we got your e\_\_\_\_\_ price list and catalogue. We found that one of your g\_\_\_\_\_ is to our satisfaction, so we are now post its picture back to you. Would you please i\_\_\_\_\_ us in detail of its price, t\_\_\_\_\_ of payment and shipment. We hope you would q\_\_\_\_\_ us the most r\_\_\_\_\_ price. As we have a l\_\_\_\_\_ population here, if the goods are s\_\_\_\_\_ well, we are sure to p\_\_\_\_\_ regular orders with you.

Best r\_\_\_\_\_,

## 5. Letter writing practice.

请翻译:

尊敬的先生:

非常感谢你方 10 月 1 日的来信, 告知我们你方市场中其他供货商的信息。

如你所知, 因为市场竞争非常激烈, 我们已经将利润降到最低。由于近期原材料涨价, 我们可能无法维持现有的价格水平, 更不会降价。作为一个选择方案, 可行的方法也许是提供一个低档的但是质量仍可以接受的低价产品。

请早日告知你方的决定。



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