

Business Correspondence

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■ Setting the Goal

V této kapitole se podíváme na základní a zásadní část obchodní komunikace – korespondenci. “Correspondence” je komunikace, obvykle psaná, mezi dvěma nebo více lidmi. Proto pokud píšete dopis nebo email, mějte na paměti, že jej bude někdo číst. Důležité je jasné a přesné sdělení.

Na konci této lekce byste měli umět:

- používat odpovídající slovní prostředky (formální nebo neformální)
- napsat a správně rozvrhnout obchodní dopis
- číst, porozumět a použít specifické fráze a výrazy v psané komunikaci

■ Basic Expressions and Vocabulary

Nouns & expressions

before the date we agreed upon	před datem, na kterém jsme se domluvili
body of the letter	hlavní část dopisu
circular letter	oběžník
claim – letter of complaint	dopis se stížnostmi
complimentary close	zdvořilostní ukončení
covering letter	průvodní dopis
due to oversight	z důvodu přehlédnutí/ opomenutí
enclosure – attachment	příloha
further to our letter – following our letter	v návaznosti na náš dopis
greeting	pozdrav
the aim of this letter	cíl tohoto dopisu
the following items	následující položky
the goods are available in our warehouse	zboží je skladem
the goods are not similar to sample	zboží se neshoduje se vzorkem
the goods arrived in good conditions	zboží dorazilo v dobrém stavu
the matter in reference	záležitost, na kterou bylo odkázáno
to our mutual benefit	v našem společném zájmu
to the kind attention of	k vaší pozornosti
up to an amount of	až do množství
hereby	tímto
in case of need	v případě potřeby
in compliance with – accordingly	v souladu s/ podle
in our favour	v náš prospěch
in partial payment	v částečných platbách
in the absence of	po dobu nepřítomnosti někoho
letter heading – heading	záhlaví/ nadpis
on advanced payment	v předčasných poplaccích
with no obligation – without commitment	bez povinnosti
with reference to – in reference to	vzhledem na něco
with the utmost care	s nejvyšší starostlivostí
with two weeks' notice	s oznámením dva týdny napřed
within the end of the month	do konce měsíce
always at your service	vždy k vašim službám
as agreed	jak dohodnuto
as far as I'm concerned	co se mě týče
as far as the payment is concerned	co se týče platby
as follows	následovně
as per invoice	přesně podle faktury

as per to the conditions
as per your request
as requested
as soon as possible
at your convenience
at your earliest convenience
at your expense
awaiting your reply
on arrival of the goods
on behalf of
payable in advance
please allow us
please send us
please send us your instructions
prices are increasing
on delivery
on receipt of the order
on short notice
on written request
order to be confirmed
our best attention
our offer is still open

přesně podle podmínek
přesně podle vašeho požadavku
jak požadováno
nejdříve jak to bude možné
pro vaši potřebu
hned jak vám to bude vyhovovat
na vaše náklady
čekáme na vaši odpověď
při doručení zboží
jménem
splatné předem
prosím, dovolte nám
prosím, zašlete nám
prosím, zašlete nám vaše instrukce
ceny stoupají
při doručení
potvrzení objednávky
narychlo
na písemný požadavek
objednávka musí být potvrzena
naše nejlepší pozornost
naše nabídka je stále otevřena

Verbs

to be late
to be overrun with orders
to be prepared to – to be willing to
to come to a decision
to come to an agreement – to reach an agreement
to cope with the competition
to correspond to the sample
to correspond with
to fix an appointment
to have the pleasure to
to stop negotiations
to submit a sample
to suit the quality – to meet the quality
to take into consideration
to apologize for
to have the power to
to look forward to

přijít/ přijet pozdě
být zavalen objednávkami
být připraven na – být ochotný
dospět ke závěru
dospět ke shodě
vypořádat se s konkurencí
shodovat se vzorkem
shodovat se s
dohodnout schůzku
být poctěn
zastavit vyjednávání/ jednání
předložit vzorek
vyhovět kvalitě/ dosáhnout dostatečné kvality
vzít na zřetel
omluvit se za
mít moc udělat něco
těšit se na něco

to make the goods available	zpřístupnit zboží
to meet a demand	splnit očekávání
to notify in advance about	předem obeznámit/ informovat o něčem
to act on behalf of	konat jménem
to agree with	souhlasit s
to be able to	být schopen něčeho
to be authorised to	být oprávněn dělat něco
to be characterised by	být charakterizován něčím
to be confident in	mít v něčem sebedůvěru
to be delighted to	být potěšen něčím
to be held responsible for	být zodpovědný za něco
to be in arrears with payments	mít zpoždění s platbami
to be in difficulty	být v potížích
to be interested in	mít zájem o něco
to pay the maximum attention to the matter	věnovat problému/ věci maximální pozornost
to reach the destination	dosáhnout cíl/ dorazit do cíle
to refer to	zmínit se o něčem
to return a letter to the sender	vrátit dopis odesílateli
to sell at the best	prodávat za nejlepších podmínek
to send under separate cover	posílat v samostatném balíku/ obálce



Hmmm, she wrote I would find the attachment on the bottom, or did she say AT?

■ Business writing is different

Writing for a business audience is usually quite different from other kinds of audience. Writing that is too formal can alienate readers, and an attempt to be overly **casual** may come across as **insincere** or unprofessional. In business writing, as in all writing, you must know your audience. Business writing strives to be **crisp** and **succinct** rather than **evocative** or creative; it stresses **specificity** and **accuracy**. This distinction does not make business writing superior or inferior to other styles. Rather, it reflects the unique purpose and considerations involved when writing in a business context.

When you write a business document, you must assume that your audience has limited time in which to read it and is likely to **skim**. Your readers have an interest in what you say insofar as it affects their working world. They want to know the “**bottom line**”: the point you are making about a situation or problem and how they should respond.

Typically, there are differences in style from paper to email. Business emails are a little less formal than a paper letter or even an attached Word document sent via email, fewer font changes and that sort of thing. Most of the differences are practical. Business email carries its own date, so putting in a date is not as necessary unless the email has an attachment, the attachment should have all the same info as a paper letter because they can be printed separately. Emails also say who they are from, so you might not need to ‘sign’ the email, however in the first contact it is **advisable** to do so.

Exercise 1

Ten words have been highlighted in the text. Match these words with their proper definition.

1. Marked by clarity, conciseness, and briskness _____
2. Characterized by clear, precise expression in few words _____
3. Tending or having the power to evoke _____
4. the quality or state of being specific _____
5. the condition or quality of being true, correct, or exact _____
6. to read or glance through (a book) quickly _____
7. The main or essential point _____
8. Suited for everyday wear or use; informal _____
9. Not honest in the expression of actual feeling _____
10. Worthy of being recommended or suggested _____



- Does it matter what kind of audience you are writing for? Why? How?
- What tends to be more informal, a letter or an email? Why?
- Should you use a lot of synonyms and complex sentences in a business email? Why?

■ Style and Grammar – Pronouns and active versus passive voice

Personal pronouns (like *I*, *we*, and *you*) are important in letters and memos. In such documents, it is perfectly appropriate to refer to yourself as *I* and to the reader as *you*. Be careful, however, when you use the pronoun *we* in a business letter that is written on company stationery, since it commits your company to what you have written. When stating your opinion, use *I*; when presenting company policy, use *we*.

Strive to achieve a style that is so clear that your messages cannot be misunderstood. One way to achieve a clear style is to minimize your use of the passive voice. Although the passive voice is sometimes necessary, often it not only makes your writing dull but also can be ambiguous or overly impersonal. Here's an example of the same point stated in passive voice and in the active voice:

PASSIVE: *The net benefits of the merger were grossly overestimated.*
(Who did the overestimating?)

ACTIVE: *The new management grossly overestimated the net benefits of the merger.*

Exercise 2

Observe the following active voice sentence.

“Everyday, more and more schools are replacing the Overhead Projector with the data show.”

Which of the following passive voice sentence gives the same idea?

The Overhead Projector is being replaced by the data show at more and more schools everyday. Everyday the data show is being replaced with the Overhead Projector by more and more schools.

Exercise 3

Rewrite the following sentences in the active voice.

Later in the day, the employees were informed of their loss of benefits by the boss herself.

The major points of the lesson were quickly learned by the class, but they were also quickly forgotten by them.

For several years, Tom was raised by his elderly grandmother.

Tall buildings and mountain roads were avoided by William because he had such a fear of heights.

■ Useful phrases

You already know how some important words. However, English correspondence is full of fixed phrases. Writing, just like speaking, is communication. If your job involves a lot of contact with business partners abroad, letters and emails are the tool to effective communication. Below you will find some useful phrases that could appear at the beginning or the end of your letters or emails.

Opening lines

With reference to your letter of 10 March, I ...

I am writing to enquire about ...

After having seen your advertisement in ... , I would like ...

After having received your address from ... , I ...

I received your address from ... and would like ...

We/ I recently wrote to you about ...

Thank you for your letter of 18 June.

Thank you for your letter regarding ...

Thank you for your letter/ email about ...

In reply to your letter of 18 June, ...

Closing lines

If you require any further information, feel free to contact me.

I look forward to your reply.

I look forward to hearing from you.

I look forward to seeing you.

Please advise as necessary.

We look forward to a successful working relationship in the future.

Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Once again, I apologise for any inconvenience.

We hope that we may continue to rely on your valued custom.

I would appreciate your immediate attention to this matter.

When 'Yours faithfully' and when 'Yours sincerely' in a business letter?

When the recipient's name is unknown to you:

Dear Sir ... Yours faithfully

Dear Madam ... Yours faithfully

Dear Sir or Madam ... Yours faithfully

When you know the recipient's name:

Dear Mr Hanson ... Yours sincerely

Dear Mrs Hanson ... Yours sincerely

Dear Miss Hanson ... Yours sincerely

Dear Ms Hanson ... Yours sincerely

When addressing a good friend or colleague:

Dear Jack ... Best wishes/ Best regards

Addressing whole departments:

Dear Sirs ... Yours faithfully

Real-life situation

3456 Tea Avenue
Georgetown, New York 89903
March 10, 2007

Mr. Robert Sim, Personnel Manager
Buldocheck Inc.
587 Rose Road

Dear Mr Seppret:

Please accept this letter as an expression of interest in the position of Areas Sales Manager.

I have enclosed a copy of my CV for your review. I am familiar with the requirements for success in the Sales profession and believe I possess the right combination of marketing and management skills.

My current position coordinating two local area sales teams has provided the opportunity to work in a high-pressure, team environment, where it is essential to be able to work closely with my colleagues in order to meet sales deadlines.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to personally discuss my potential contributions to your company with you. Please telephone me at after 2:00 p.m. to suggest a time that we may meet. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,
John Smith
Enclosure

*Ken's Cheese House
34 Chatley Avenue
Seattle, WA 98765
Tel:
Fax:
Email: kenny@cheese.com*

Novemeber 28, 2007

*Fred Flintstone
Sales Manager
Cheese Specialists Inc.
456 Rubble Road
Rockville, IL*

Dear Mr Flintstone:

*With reference to our telephone conversation today, I am writing to confirm your order for:
120 x Cheddar Deluxe Ref. No. 856*

*The order will be shipped within three days via UPS and should arrive at your store in about
10 days.*

Please contact us again if we can help in any way.

Yours sincerely,

*Kenneth Simon
Director of Ken's Cheese House*

The basics of good business letter writing are easy to learn. Phrases that are usually found in any standard business letter are used as a kind of frame and introduction to the content of business letters. If you use these standard phrases, you can give a professional tone to your English business letters.

Writing Business Letters

A good business letter is brief, straightforward, and polite. If possible, it should be limited to one single-spaced typewritten page. Because it is so brief, a business letter is often judged on small, but important, things: format, grammar, punctuation, openings and closings. A business letter is not the place to try out fancy fonts or experimental writing styles.

There are two main styles of business letters:

Full block style: Align *all* elements on the left margin.

Modified block style: Down the middle of the page, align the return address, date, closing, signature, and typed name; align other elements on the left page margin.

Below are the elements of a standard business letter and their functions:

Return Address:

Your address (or the address of the company you represent). If you are using pre-printed stationary, there is no need to retype the information.

Date:

Leave two blank lines after the return address. Always spell out the month and include the day, a comma, and the year.

Inside Address:

Leave two blank lines after the date. Then type the address of the person or company to whom you are writing.

Salutation:

Type *Dear*, followed by the person's name. End the line with a colon. If you don't know the name of the person, use a title instead (i.e., *Dear Editor*, *Dear Madam*).

Body:

Align your message on the left margin. Skip a line before starting a new paragraph, but do not indent the paragraph's first line. Make sure that each paragraph is clear and concise.

Closing:

Leave two lines of space after your last body paragraph, then use a conventional closing, followed by a comma (i.e., *Sincerely*, *Sincerely Yours*, *Respectfully*).

Signature:

Your signature should appear below your closing. Unless you have established a personal relationship with the person you are writing, use both your first and last name.

Name and Position:

Four lines after the closing, type your full name. Do not include a title (*Mr.* or *Mrs.*). If you are writing on behalf of an organization, type your title on the next line.

Abbreviations at the end of a letter:

If you send a copy of a letter to someone other than the person addressed, use *cc*: and the person's name. Use *Enc.* or *Enclosure* if you enclose something with the letter. If someone else types it, put the writer's initials in capitals, then a slash and the typist's initials in lowercase: *MT/fjr*. Just one abbreviation should appear on a line.

■ Common Phrases for Business Letters

Request for information

I am writing to inquire about ...
I am writing in reference to ...
I read/ heard ... and would like to know ...
Could you please send me ...
at the address below/above
Thank you for your assistance.
I look forward to hearing from you.

Response to request

Thank you for your interest/inquiry
Enclosed is the information you requested.
You can learn more about this at ...
If you have further questions,
If you require assistance, please contact:
If I can be of more help, please feel free to contact me at ...

Requests

Could you please send me your most recent brochure?
Could you fax me the results of the market survey?
I would like to order ten copies of the book, *Touchy Situations*.
I would be very grateful if you could send me this information.
Please return the enclosed envelope with your payment.

Goodwill

Thank you for your hospitality.
I enjoyed having lunch with you last week while I was in New York.
Congratulations on your promotion to General Manager.
I want(ed) to congratulate you on your new position.
I was happy to hear that contract negotiations went well.

Introduction of Product/ Service.

I am writing to tell you about ...
(Our new product) is coming out next month.
This product/ service is designed to (help you) ...

Reference

I am writing in regard to ...
I am writing in reference to ...

Please refer to the enclosed invoice/ brochure.
I hope you have had a chance to look over the materials we sent.

Confirmation

I am writing to confirm ...
I would like to confirm what we discussed last Friday.
I would just like to confirm the main points we discussed ...

Notification

I am writing to let you know that ...
Please be aware/ informed that ...
I would like to inform you of a recent policy change. I am happy to inform you that ...
Your request for funding has been approved.

Offering Assistance

We would be happy to ...
If we can be of assistance, please don't hesitate to ask.

Collection

According to our records ...
Our records show that ...
Your monthly instalment is past due.
Please send payment as soon as possible.

■ Effective Emails

Email has become a popular means of both internal and external communication in business. The main reasons are:

- it's faster than writing and sending a letter
- it's cheaper than a phone call

However, there are some similarities and differences between email messages and business letters. What is same is that grammar and punctuation should be good enough so that the writing is understandable and professional.

The following tips will help you keep your email messages effective and clear:

1. Subjects

Give the message a subject/ title. Email messages without a subject may not be opened because of a fear of viruses and especially note that it is very easy to forget to type this important information.

2. Subject contents

Keep the subject short and clear but avoid such headings as: 'Good News', 'Hello', 'Message from Mary'. These headings are common in messages containing viruses. Short but specific headings are needed, e.g. Order No. 2348X
Delayed Shipment
Laboratory Equipment Order

3. Greetings

Start the message with a greeting so as to help create a friendly but business-like tone. The choice of using the other name versus the surname will depend on who you are writing to. If you have communicated with the receiver previously and he/ she is at a similar level to you, then the use of the other name would be appropriate. If the receiver is more senior to you, or if you are in doubt, it would be safer (particularly in the first communication) to use the person's surname/ family name together with a title, e.g. Dear Mr Smithson, Dear Ms Stringer.

It is also becoming quite common to write the greeting without a comma, e.g. Dear Miss Lawson
e.g. Dear KK

4. Purpose

Start with a clear indication of what the message is about in the first paragraph. Give full details in the following paragraph(s). Make sure that the final paragraph indicates what should happen next. e.g. I will send a messenger to your office on Tuesday morning to collect the faulty goods. e.g. Please let me have your order by the beginning of the month.

5. Action

Any action that you want the reader to do should be clearly described, using politeness phrases. Subordinates should use expressions such as 'Could you...' or 'I would be grateful if...'. Superior staff should also use polite phrases, for example, 'Please...'

6. Attachments

Make sure you refer, in the main message, to any attachments you are adding and of course make extra sure that you remember to include the attachment(s). As attachments can transmit viruses, try not to use them, unless you are sending complicated documents. Copy-and-paste text-only contents into the body of the email. If you use an attachment, make sure the file name describes the content, and is not too general; e.g. 'message.doc' is bad, but 'QA Report 2008.doc' is good.

7. Endings

End the message in a polite way. Common endings are: Yours sincerely, Best regards, Best wishes, Regards,
If you did not put a comma after the greeting at the beginning of the message, then do not put a comma after the ending either, e.g. Best wishes
e.g. Regards

8. Names

Include your name at the end of the message. It is most annoying to receive an email which does not include the name of the sender. The problem is that often the email address of the sender does not indicate exactly who it is from, e.g. 0385915d@kouchon.fr

Please follow these guidelines with all email messages that you send.

Kind regards

Jennifer Ranford

Human Resources Manager

From: Hiroshi Tanaka
TO: bjsmith@afs.com
cc: Joe Klein
Subject: RE: Z56 Samples for JVS

No problem.

----Original Message----

FROM: Bill Smith [mailto:bjsmith@afs.com]
SENT: February 6, 2004 5:15 p.m.
TO: hiroshi_tanaka@afs.co.jp
cc: Joe Klein
SUBJECT: Z56 Samples for JVS

Hiroshi,

After talking with you on the phone yesterday, I talked with Joe. There's a slight change of plans. Can you include four samples in the shipment instead of the two that we discussed?

Let me know if there's a problem.

Thanks,
Bill

■ Business email writing tips

DO

- write an informative subject line
- put the key point of your message up front
- be brief

- make it easy for the reader to reply yes or no or give a short answer (instead of “let me know what you think” write “Is Tuesday or Wednesday at 3PM best for you?”)
- make it easy to read, combine Upper & lower case, use white space and legible font
- personalize by using conversational tone(contractions, pronouns)
- end well with an appropriate next step
- proofread
- wait a moment before pressing 'send'
- make yourself look good online because your email can be forwarded to anyone or everyone else in the company or anywhere

DON'T

- don't send an email you wouldn't want anyone else to read, it's too easy to forward
- don't leave subject line blank
- don't use all capital letters
- don't forward a message without a brief comment why you're forwarding it
- don't overrun emails with smiley faces or other emoticons.
- don't let emotions or offensive language detract from your message
- don't send without checking for mistakes

2

■ A bit of grammar

Conditional Sentences / If-Clauses Type I, II und III

Conditional Sentences are also known as Conditional Clauses or If Clauses. They are used to express that the action in the main clause (without if) can only take place if a certain condition (in the clause with if) is fulfilled. There are three types of Conditional Sentences.

Conditional Sentence Type 1

It is possible and also very likely that the condition will be fulfilled.

Form: if + Simple Present, will-Future

- *If I find her address, I'll send her an invitation.*

Conditional Sentence Type 2

It is possible but very unlikely, that the condition will be fulfilled.

Form: if + Simple Past, Conditional I (= would + Infinitive)

- *If I found her address, I would send her an invitation.*

Conditional Sentence Type 3

It is impossible that the condition will be fulfilled because it refers to the past.

Form: if + Past Perfect, Conditional II (= would + have + Past Participle)

- *If I had found her address, I would have sent her an invitation.*

■ Getting better

Exercise 4

Choose the best response for each one

1. Could you please _____ that email that you got from Frank.
forward me | forward to me | forward it to me
2. When you send your report to Tom, make sure to _____ me as well.
forward | copy (or cc - pron. "seesee") | send
3. Somehow your email ended up in my _____ folder.
trash mail | bad mail | junk mail
4. You must have _____ my message by mistake.
deleted | delete | destroyed
5. Sending someone a "hidden" copy of an email is known as:
cheating | cc-ing someone | bcc-ing someone
6. To send something by mistake = To send something _____ .
by chance | by accident | by error
7. You should always use appropriate, businesslike language in all _____ communications.
electronic | electric | electrode
8. I thanked him for his _____ (= answer).
replication | reply | replay
9. Many big companies have a system which _____ (= keeps track of/checks) their employees' email.
monitor | monitors | looks
10. I didn't get that _____ (= file that is attached to a message).
attack | copy | attachment

Exercise 5

1. If I _____ you, I would apologize to her right away. (to be)
was | were | have been
2. If I run into her, I _____ her that you're looking for her. (to tell)
would tell | tell | will tell
3. If you _____ that again, I will call the police. (to do)
to do | do | will do
4. He would never have asked her out on a date if she _____ him first. (to kiss)
hadn't kissed | didn't kiss | will not kiss
5. If you were her, what _____? (to do)
would you do | did you do | do you do
6. If she hadn't gone to England, she _____ Orlando Bloom. (to meet)
would not meet | did not meet | would not have met
7. If it doesn't start snowing, we _____ this evening. (to go skiing)
won't go skiing | wouldn't go skiing | don't go skiing
8. If you had saved some money earlier, you _____ broke right now. (to be)
would not have been | will not be | are not
9. If I _____ at the airport so late, I would not have missed my flight. (to arrive)
didn't arrive | hadn't arrived | would not arrive
10. If you buy one t-shirt, you _____ the second one free.
will have gotten | would get | get

Check Out

Exercise 6

Dear Sir-As someone who has travelled throughout Asia 1) _____ business 2) _____ holiday I would like 3) _____ give my opinion 4) _____ its environmental impact. Having visited Indonesia, Thailand 5) _____ Malaysia I understand that tourism can bring money 6) _____ developing countries. However, this money often goes into 7) _____ pockets of foreign investors, 8) _____ only rarely benefits local people. Multinational hotel chains also have little regard for 9) _____ surrounding wildlife when they build new resorts. This can cause many problems. In view of these facts we, as tourists, can directly affect these countries 10) _____ 11) _____ positive way if we 12) _____ thoughtful. When we visit these countries we can visit restaurants, bars 13) _____ even hotels that

14) _____ owned 15) _____ local people. In addition, we can refuse 16) _____ give luxury resorts our patronage 17) _____ therefore prevent them from becoming even larger. Most importantly we should check that any tours or excursions we take have minimal effect 18) _____ 19) _____ natural surroundings. Finally, we can even attempt 20) _____ change 21) _____ behaviour of other tourists 22) _____ sharing our opinions. If we follow these simple steps we can be sure that our pleasure is not causing any harm 23) _____ people or places that we visit.

■ Phrasal Verbs to Remember

calm down	relax _____
cheer up	become happy _____
get in	enter _____
get off	leave _____

■ Vocabulary Checklist

Find the correct English translation for the following expressions:

- _____
- cíl tohoto dopisu
- _____
- následující položky
- _____
- zboží je skladem
- _____
- splnit očekávání
- _____
- jsem potěšen
- _____
- zodpovědná osoba je
- _____

■ Vocabulary Checklist

Choose ten most important words of this unit, put them down and use them in a sample sentence.

