

## Replies and Quotations

### 复函与报价

### Into the Unit

A reply to an inquiry from a regular customer is normally fairly brief, and does not need to be more than polite and direct.

Provided the supplier (the seller) is in a position to meet his or her correspondent's (the buyer's) requirements, his or her reply will generally:

- (1) thank the writer of the inquiry for the letter in question,
- (2) supply all the information requested, and refer both to enclosures and to samples, catalogues and other items being sent by separate post,
- (3) provide additional information, not specifically requested by the customer, so long as it is relevant, and
- (4) conclude with one or two lines encouraging the customer to place orders and assuring him or her of good service.

In the opening, you should mention your prospective customer's name. That is to say, if the customer signs the letter of inquiry as *Mr. B. Green*, then begin your reply with *Dear Mr. Green*, not *Dear Sir*, which indicates that you have not bothered to remember the inquirer's name.

When you thank the writer for his/her inquiry, don't forget to mention the date of his/her letter and quote any other references that appear.

You had better avoid opening with expressions like "We are in receipt of your inquiry" or "In reply to your inquiry". These openings tend to sound rather cold.

And you should avoid phrases like "We are taking the liberty of sending you ..." or "We hasten to reply to your esteemed inquiry of the 10th inst. ...", or you will sound like a firm that should have gone out of business a century ago.

If you use expressions like "It was with the utmost pleasure that we received ..." or "We deeply regret that we cannot supply you with ...", you will appear at best desperate or, worse, insincere. A straightforward "Thank you for ..." or "I would like to thank you for ..." or "I am sorry that ..." is enough.

Most answers to inquiries are of a routine character. You write them in plain, direct English, and give your customers the information asked for (or you may want to give them a quotation), and this is basically all that is wanted.

But if your company is keen to increase sales, or is putting a new product on the market, the letter of reply must now fulfill the function of a salesperson: it must contain information which will sustain the reader's interest and persuade him or her to place an order. In such cases the style of the letter is of great importance. A simple answer that you have the goods in stock is not enough. Your customer might have made ten other inquiries, so you have to encourage or persuade your customer to do business with you. For example:

*We think you have made an excellent choice in selecting this line, and once you have seen the samples we are sure you will agree that this is unique both in texture and colour.*

If you do not have what the inquirer has asked for, but have an alternative, offer it to him or her. But do not criticize the product he or she originally asked for.

It is possible, of course, that you may not be able to handle the order or answer the inquiry. If it is so, let the inquirer know as soon as possible. It is irritating to read a long letter only to find that the company cannot help.

Always thank the customer for writing to you. If you have not done so in the beginning of the letter, you can do so at the end. You should also encourage further inquiries.

Remember: a reply to an initial inquiry is the first impression your customer will have of you, and that will influence how he or she judges you. So a direct approach, telling the customer what the product is, why he or she should buy it, how much it will cost, and what concessions you are offering, will create an impression of an efficient company that can handle his or her order smoothly.

### Tips for you!

*Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.*

— Henry Ford

*A businessman's judgment is no better than his information.*

— Robert P. Lamont

*Property may be destroyed and money may lose its purchasing power; but, character, health, knowledge and good judgment will always be in good demand under all conditions.*

— Roger W. Babson

*The product that will not sell without advertising will not sell profitably with advertising.*

— Albert Lasker

*You cannot antagonize and influence at the same time.*

— J. S. Knox

## Specimen Letter 3-1

# US

## UNIVERSAL SOFTWARE, INC.

2468 OAK STREET, SAN FRANCISCO CA94105

Tel: (415) 543-0000 Fax: (415) 543-0001

September 6, 201-

Shen Husheng  
Import Manager  
Cathay Business Machines Import & Export Corporation  
2000 Central Boulevard  
Pudong, Shanghai  
China

Dear Mr. Shen:

Thank you very much for your yesterday's fax about our Business Guide software package for IBM-compatible PCs. I am happy to answer your questions as follows:

1. Business Guide combines the best features of integrated and separate packages. Business Guide consists of several modules, but each module communicates with every other one. Therefore, the changes you make in one module are automatically entered on the others. This saves a lot of time.
2. Yes, you can switch from function to function without downloading. You simply use the menu.
3. Yes, you can customize the billing periods.
4. Business Guide includes a security system that allows different users to use the program simultaneously—but only the people you authorize.

The enclosed brochure describes Business Guide and lists the prices of the different modules and of the full package. Since this software package is a flexible, comprehensive, and easy-to-use accounting program, it is very popular with CPA's.

If you have any further questions, please let me know.

Sincerely yours

*Henry Morgan*

Henry Morgan  
Overseas Department

Encl.

## Specimen Letter 3-2

# **DDE**

**Deepditch Electronics Ltd.**

24 July 201-

Mr. Marcelo lacona  
Vice-President  
Alfa S.A.  
Buenos Aires  
Argentina

Dear Mr. lacona,

Thank you for your inquiry of 23 July in which you asked about the compact discs we advertised in this month's edition of *A.V. News*.

The stocks we are holding include both CD-R and CD-RW, both of which would be suitable for any type of recording. They are "Three Stars", which is a brand name you will certainly recognize, and the reason their prices are so competitive is that they are part of a bankrupt stock that was offered to us.

Because of their low price and the small profit margin we are working on, we will not be offering any trade discounts on this consignment. But we sell a wide range of compact discs and have attached a price list giving you details of trade, quantity, and cash discounts on our other products.

We have sent separately samples of the advertised CDs and other brands we stock, and would urge you to place an order as soon as possible as there has been a huge response to our advertisement. Thank you for your interest.

Yours sincerely,

*Ouyang Qianfang*

OUYANG Qianfang (Ms.)  
Export Manager  
Int'l Business Dept.

Attachment: pricelist

92 Nanxun Street, Shenzhen, Guangdong, China  
Tel: (0755) 700 0000 Fax: (0755) 700 0001 Zip Code: 518000

### Specimen Letter 3-3

**Macer** S.A.

24th November 201-

Ms Kuang Yilian  
Foshan Sweethome Installations Ltd.  
2 Xiyue Street  
Foshan, Guangdong  
China

Dear Ms Kuang,

We thank you for your letter of 21st November and are pleased to enclose a detailed quotation for bathroom showers.

Besides those advertised in the *Builders' Journal*, our illustrated catalogue also enclosed shows various types of bathroom fittings and the sizes available. Most types can be supplied from stock. 45-60 days should be allowed for delivery of those marked with an asterisk.

Building contractors in Hong Kong and Taiwan have found our equipment easy to install and attractive in appearance. Naturally all parts are replaceable, and our quotation includes prices of spare parts. We can allow a 2% discount on all orders of US\$6,000 and over, and a 3% on orders exceeding US\$20,000.

Any orders you place with us will be processed promptly.

Yours faithfully,  
*Francesco Marani*  
Francesco Marani  
Sales Manager

Encl. 2

Via S. Lorenzo, 24/a  
Castellon Spain  
Tel: (964) 560001 Fax: (964) 560002

Specimen Letter 3-4

# *Ganjiang Potteries Ltd.*

83 Ciqi Street, Jingdezhen, Jiangxi, China, Tel: (0798) 700 0000 Fax: (0798) 700 0001 Zip Code: 333000

## SHANGHAI REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE

444 Jinling Road, Suite 1202, Shanghai 200002, China Tel: (021) 6300 0000 Fax: (021) 6300 0001

12 August 201-

V. Doraraj  
Dolly Enterprises Pte. Ltd.  
Midlink Plaza  
Singapore 0718

Dear Mr. Doraraj,

It was a pleasure to receive your letter of 9 August, and we are enclosing the catalogue and pricelist you asked for.

You will see that we can offer a wide selection of dinner and tea services ranging from the rugged "Greystone" earthenware breakfast sets, to the delicate "Ming" bone china dinner service.

You can choose from more than fifty designs which include the elegance of Wedgwood, the delicate pattern of Willow, and richness of Brownstone glaze.

We would be pleased to add your clients to our list of customers throughout the world and could promise them an excellent product with a first-class service. We would be glad to accept orders for any number of pieces, and can mix sets if required.

You will see that our prices are quoted c.i.f. Melbourne and we are offering a special 10% discount off all net prices, with delivery within three weeks from receipt of order.

If there is any further information you require, please contact us.

Yours sincerely,  
*Chu Yunlong*  
(Mr.) CHU Yunlong  
Sales Manager

Enc.

## Specimen Letter 3-5

***Datex*** Trading Co. Ltd.

Lianfang Building, 666 Huayuan Avenue,  
Dalian, Liaoning, China  
Tel: (0411) 400 0000 Fax: (0411) 400 0001  
Zip Code: 116000

4 March 201-

Mr. Fred Johns  
Chief Buyer  
Kiddie Komer, Inc.  
#202-418 Richards Street  
Vancouver, B.C.  
Canada V6B 3A7

Dear Mr. Johns,

We are pleased to receive your inquiry of 2 March, and to hear that you liked our range of sweaters.

There would certainly be no trouble in supplying you from our wide selection of garments which we make for all age groups.

We can offer you the quantity discount you asked for which would be 5% off net prices for orders over \$20,000, but the usual allowance for a trade discount in our country is 10%, and we always deal on payment by sight L/C. However, we would be prepared to review this once we have established a firm trading association with you.

We are enclosing our summer catalogue and price-list quoting prices c.i.f. Vancouver.

We are sure you will find a ready sale for our products in Canada as have other retailers throughout Europe and America, and we do hope we can reach an agreement on the terms quoted.

Thank you for your interest; we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

*Gao Jun*  
GAO Jun (Mr.)

Encl.

## Specimen Letter 3-6

### ***SHANGHAI TEXTILES TRADING CO. LTD.***

---

6 March 201-

Mr. Larry Crane  
China Trade Manager  
H. Woods & Co. Ltd.  
Nesson House, Newell Street  
Birmingham B15 3EL  
United Kingdom

Dear Mr. Crane,

Thank you for your inquiry of 1 March.

We can supply on FOB basis the following tweed lengths from stock:

- 1) Shade No.32 in 40m lengths @ £6.30/m
- 2) Shade No.38 in 30m lengths @ £7.50/m
- 3) Shade No.47 in 30m lengths @ £9.00/m
- 4) Shade No.58 in 60m lengths @ £12.00/m

All are suitable for skirt-making; samples of each are enclosed.

Our usual terms of payment are by confirmed irrevocable L/C available by draft at sight.

We hope you will place an order with us.

Yours sincerely,

*Wu Tianming*

WU Tianming (Mr.)  
Manager

Encl.

---

72 Zhongshan Road, Shanghai 200000, Tel: (021) 6000 0000 Fax: (021) 6000 0001



## Specimen Letter 3-7

*Success*

**Office Supplies, Inc.**

876 Xihu Street

Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China

Tel: (0571) 5000 0000 Fax: (0571) 5000 0001 Zip Code: 310000

September 25, 201-

Yosuf Aihamed  
Purchase Manager  
Crescent Trading Co. Ltd.  
357 Moonstone Street  
Karachi, Pakistan

Dear Mr. Aihamed:

We appreciate your interest in Success Office Supplies and are delighted to send you the information you requested:


Ruled ledger paper, by the ream only costs US\$40; with the purchase of six or more reams, the price is reduced to US\$36 per ream, a saving of at least US\$24.

Black, reinforced ledger binders are US\$25 each; with the purchase of six or more binders, the price is only US\$22, a saving of at least US\$18.

Because we are manufacturers of many other fine office supplies, ranging from ball-point pens to promotional novelties, we have enclosed for your consideration a copy of our current catalog. Should you decide to place an order, you could use the convenient order form in the catalog.

Please let us know if we may be of further assistance.

Sincerely yours,



GUO Yimin (Miss)  
International Business Department

Enclosure

## Specimen Letter 3-8

# F & M

## Sewing Supplies, Ltd.

128 Jiangning Road, Nanjing, Jiangsu, China

Tel: (025) 2000 0000 Fax: (025) 2000 0001 Zip Code: 210000

November 12, 201-

Mr. Fung Cho Yuet  
Business Manager  
Fair Sea Sportswear Manufacturing Co. Ltd.  
81-A Jalan Street  
Kuala Lumpur  
Malaysia

Dear Mr. Fung,

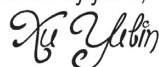
Thank you for your interest in F & M equipment. We are happy to supply you with the information you requested.

The following prices are quoted per dozen. Individual units are slightly higher:

| <u>Item</u>          | <u>1 Dozen @</u> |
|----------------------|------------------|
| A-1 Garment Turner   | US\$2400         |
| A-1 Automatic Winder | US\$1200         |
| Ace Thread Trimmer   | US\$1800         |

In case you have any further questions, Mr. Fung, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,



Xu Yulin (Miss)  
Overseas Sales Department

## Specimen Letter 3-9

### *Shanghai Garments Trading Co., Ltd.*

123 Dadushi Road, Shanghai 200300, China  
Tel: 6200 0000 Fax: 6200 0001

October 30, 201-

Messrs. Carlson & Maxwell  
185 4th Avenue  
New Rochelle, NY 10802  
U.S.A.

Attention: Mr. Paul Carlson

Ladies/Gentlemen:

We are pleased to make you an offer regarding our "Fancy" dresses and trouser suits in the sizes you require.

Nearly all the models you saw at our fashion show are obtainable, except trouser suits in pink, of which the smaller sizes have been sold out. This line is being manufactured continuously, but will only be available again in February, so it could be delivered to you in March. All other models can be supplied by the middle of January 201-, subject to our receiving your firm order by 15th November. Our prices are quoted on C. I. F. Eastern Coast basis. If you would prefer the goods to be sent by air freight, this will be charged extra at cost.

Trouser suits sizes 8-16 in white, yellow, red, turquoise, navy blue, black, sizes 12-14 also in pink \$26,500.00 per 100.

Fancy dresses sizes 8-16 in white, yellow, red, turquoise, black \$18,450.00 per 100.

We will keep this offer valid until 31st December, 201-. Delivery is to be made within 45 days of receipt of order and payment, by irrevocable letter of credit available by sight draft, or by cheque with order.

You will be receiving cuttings of our materials and a color chart. These were airmailed to you this morning.

We hope you will agree that our prices are very competitive for these good quality clothes, and we look forward to receiving your initial order.

Sincerely,

*Rong Jianping*

RONG Jianping (Mr.)

Overseas Sales Department

## Comprehension Help

- 3-1-1 CPA: Certified Public Accountant (美) 执业会计师, 其地位与英国的 Chartered Accountant “皇家特许会计师” 相同, 在我国又称 “注册会计师”。
- 3-2-1 ... that they are part of a bankrupt stock that was offered to us.: ... that the CDs are part of the goods that were offered to us by a bankrupt firm from stock (most likely to clear up their debts).  
.....这批光盘是一家破产企业提供给我们的库存货物中的一部分。
- 3-2-2 profit margin: margin of profit 利润赚头, 利润幅度
- 3-2-3 consignment: something consigned, esp. a shipment of goods sent to a dealer for sale or safekeeping (运送、寄售或保管的) 货物
- 3-2-4 a wide range of compact discs...  
range: 此处也可用 selection 一词, 见 Letter 3-4 第三行
- 3-2-5 We have sent... samples of ... other brands we stock...  
此处 brands 意为 products of other brands 其他牌号的产品
- 3-3-1 bathroom fittings: 浴室设备
- 3-3-2 building contractor: 建筑承包商, 营造商
- 3-4-1 dinner and tea services: 整套的餐具和茶具。service: a set of utensils or articles used in serving(全套) 器具。
- 3-4-2 “Greystone” earthenware breakfast sets: “玄武石” 陶土早餐具
- 3-4-3 “Ming” bone china dinner service: “明朝” 白瓷餐具; bone china: 骨灰瓷(一种以瓷土与骨灰或磷酸钙混合烧制成的半透明白色瓷器)
- 3-4-4 Wedgwood: 韦奇伍德陶瓷(英国一种有白色浮雕的蓝底精致陶瓷, 原系商标名)
- 3-4-5 brownstone: 褐砂石
- 3-4-6 ... to add your clients to our list of customers throughout the world...  
client 和 customer 顾客, 系同义词; 此处写信人分别选用这两个词仅为了避免同一词的重复使用, 无意义上的差异。但是 client 除有 a person who buys (esp. goods) “(买东西的) 顾客” 之解外, 还可以是 a person or company for whom a lawyer, accountant, advertising agency, etc. is acting (向律师、会计师、广告商等买 “服务” 的) 顾客。因此, 作 “顾客” 解, client 涵盖的面更广; 但 customer 一词似乎用得较频繁。
- 3-4-7 ... and can mix sets if required.  
.....如有需要, 可(拆零后) 另行配套(出售)。
- 3-4-8 net price: a price from which no amount has been deducted as a commission, discount or rebate 净价
- 3-5-1 trading association: 贸易关系, 与 trade/business relations/relationship 同义

- 3-5-2 ... you will find a ready sale for our products in Canada as have other retailers throughout Europe and America ...  
 1) to find a ready sale : 畅销, 也可用 to find a ready/good market for (some products/goods, etc.) 这一词组; 2) ... as have retailers throughout Europe and America, 该从句是省略句, 整个从句应为: ... as retailers throughout Europe and America have found a ready sale for our products there. 整句意为: .....欧美的零售商已经了解, 我们的产品很畅销; 您将发现我们的产品在加拿大也会同样畅销。
- 3-6-1 Shade No. : 色号; shade (色彩的) 浓淡深浅; 色度; 不同色泽的料子
- 3-7-1 ruled ledger paper : 直线账页
- 3-7-2 ream : 令(纸张的计数单位, 以前为 480 张, 现为 500 张)
- 3-7-3 reinforced ledger binder : 硬面账页夹
- 3-7-4 promotional novelties: (做促销广告或宣传用的) 小礼品; novelties 指新颖小巧而价廉的物品(尤指装饰品、玩具等)
- 3-8-1 garment turner : 服装翻转机
- 3-8-2 automatic winder : 自动络筒机
- 3-8-3 thread trimmer : 线头修剪机
- 3-8-4 ... please do not hesitate to contact me.  
 .....请即与我联系。此句中也可用 feel free to 来替代 do not hesitate to 这一词组。但有学者认为在实际业务中用这两个词组都显得有些拖泥带水, 不如说 Please contact me 更简洁, 以体现出工作的快节奏。
- 3-9-1 trouser suit: (女子的上衣与裤子相配的) 裤套装
- 3-9-2 Nearly all the models you saw at our fashion show are obtainable ...  
 此处 model 指(妇女时装等的)“款式”, 而非“时装模特儿”。
- 3-9-3 This line is being manufactured continuously ...  
 line: a stock of goods of a particular type (货物的)类, 种, 此处指 the smaller sizes of trouser suits in pink。
- 3-9-4 by air freight : 空运货物时尤用该词组; by airmail 指“空递邮件”。两词组均可简写为 by air, 但 by air 也可指“空运(人员)”。
- 3-9-5 turquoise: greenish blue 绿松石色, 清绿色;(原意)绿松石
- 3-9-6 Delivery is to be made within 45 days of receipt of order and payment, by irrevocable letter of credit available by sight draft, or by cheque with order.  
 这个句子是由两个并列句组成的, 前一个为: Delivery is to be made within 45 days of receipt of order; 后一个应该为: payment is to be made by irrevocable letter of credit available by sight draft, or by cheque with order. 写信人为避免 is to be made 这个短语的重复, 特意在 payment 后用了逗号。有关该句子的修辞手法, 请参看第 10 和第 11 单元的 Variety Forum 板块。
- 3-9-7 cheque with order : 亦可用 cash with order (缩写 CWO) 订货付款, 随订单付现

3-9-8 You will be receiving cuttings of our materials and a color chart.

1) 此句也可写成: You will receive ... 但用 will be doing 形式有时可比用 will do 形式显得更礼貌。2) cutting 此处意为 sample cutting 剪样; 3) color chart 色板, 色卡。整句意为: 您将收到我方原料的剪样和色卡。

## Bonus Glossary

|                                                 |                                |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| bid 递盘 (尤指买方的) 开价出价                             | Free Alongside Ship (FAS) 船边交货 |
| Carriage & Insurance Paid To (CIP) 运费保险费付至..... | Free Carrier (FCA) 货交承运人       |
| Carriage Paid To (CPT) 运费付至.....                | Free On Board (FOB) 装运港船上交货    |
| ceiling price 限价, 最高价                           | gross price 毛价, 总价             |
| consumer goods 消费品                              | lead time 从订货至交货的间隔时间          |
| consumer 消费者                                    | mart 市场, 贸易中心                  |
| Cost & Freight (CFR) 成本加运费                      | net price 净价                   |
| counter-bid 还价                                  | offer sheet 报盘单                |
| counter-offer 还盘                                | offer 报盘                       |
| current price 现价                                | outlet (商品的) 销路, 市场; 商店, 商行    |
| Delivered At Place (DAP) 目的地交货                  | prevailing price 现行价格          |
| Delivered At Terminal (DAT) 终点站交货               | quotation sheet 报价单            |
| Delivered Duty Paid (DDP) 完税后交货                 | retail price 零售价               |
| department store 百货商店                           | rock-bottom price 最低价          |
| durables (durable goods) 耐用品                    | stockist <英> 零售商人(或商店)         |
| end-user 最终用户                                   | supermarket 超级市场               |
| Ex Works (EXW) 工厂交货                             | terms of trade 进出口价格比          |
| fancy goods 花哨商品 (如饰物、小摆饰、女式高级鞋、帽、手套)           | trade terms <价格术语> 贸易条件, 交易条件  |
| firm offer 实盘                                   | wholesale price 批发价            |

### (Verb + Noun) collocations

|                                        |                     |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------|
| to make an offer / a quotation 报盘 / 报价 | to offer firm 报实盘   |
| to offer (a commodity) (就某个商品进行) 报盘    | to quote a price 报价 |

## Word Power Development

### 1. discount *n.*

Will you please also indicate delivery times, your terms of payment, and details of discount for regular purchases and large orders?

However, we would be willing to *allow/grant/offer* you a special 2.5% discount if you could see your way to increasing your order to \$50,000.

We stress, however, that this offer, because of the special discount and limited stocks remaining, is open for only 14 days from the date of this letter.

The prices quoted are subject to the usual trade discount.

The following items are offered at a discount of 10%.

**v.**

That original price was discounted by 10%.

They discounted 10% from the original price.

We are ready to discount all the articles marked with an asterisk.

## 2. inquire/enquire

- a) We were very pleased to receive your letter inquiring about/for electric heaters and are happy to enclose a copy of our latest catalogue.

We are writing to inquire if it would be possible for you to supply a modified version of your MILFORD bedroom suite.

- b) We are now inquiring into the cause of delay and will let you know our findings as soon as possible.

### **inquiry/enquiry**

Thank you for your inquiry about our leisure products range.

We have received a number of inquiries for floor coverings suitable for use on rough surface.

We now enclose our order No.3241 for the goods mentioned in our original inquiry.

Could you make inquiries on our behalf with your overseas branches or correspondent banks in the Gulf States about the credit status of ABC Co. Ltd.?

## 3. popular

- a) In the enclosed brochure you will see details about this very popular model.

We are leading bicycle dealers in this city, where cycling is popular, and have branches in five neighbouring towns.

- b) This model is now available at popular prices.

### **popularize**

The company are trying to popularize their new detergent in East Asian countries.

### **popularity**

This product achieved its popularity through skillful advertising on the part of the firm who produced it.

As you know, our products enjoy great popularity in your country.

## 4. range n.

Your Mr. J. Needham called on us a few days ago and left a complete range of samples.

Our AQUATITE range is particularly suitable for warm climates, and during the past years



we have supplied this range to clients in several tropical countries.

We would like you to send us details of your various ranges, together with samples of the different qualities of material used.

The principal demand is for articles in the medium price range.

v.

This is an exceptional opportunity for you to obtain real bargains: our price reduction ranges from 15% to 30%.

We can supply blouses in colours ranging from white through pink to purple.

## 5. sell

We are selling our new model at a premium.

We hope that the toys will sell well and that you will place a repeat order.

### sale

- a) We are sending you a representative selection of our most popular lines and you will find a ready sale for them.

Dealers who have displayed our brightly coloured range have reported good sales even in the present season, when hardware sales are usually at their lowest.

- b) We are very concerned that your sales in recent months have fallen considerably.

As sales agents of German and Japanese manufacturers are now active in the market, we find it difficult to maintain your past volume of sales unless you reduce your prices.

Should sales improve, I would get in touch with you again.

- c) These articles are for display only, not for sale.

We are sure they will arrive in time to go on sale for Christmas.

Tomato soup that is usually sold at twelve cents a can is now on sale for ten cents.

## 6. stock v.

Would you send me price lists and catalogues for all products you stock?

We are interested to hear that you saw our advertisement in *the Camera Review*, and appreciate your interest in the products we stock.

n.

- a) Prompt shipment is guaranteed for we hold/have ample stocks.

We are selling off our entire stock at greatly reduced prices.

As our stocks of these goods are limited, we suggest you place an order immediately.

This is a “once-in-a-lifetime” opportunity, and we expect to clear our stock in a few weeks.

Orders will be executed in strict rotation and can be accepted only as long as stocks last.

- b) We are glad to inform you that all the items listed in your inquiry are in stock.

We did expect this model to be back in stock last month, having been so informed by our own suppliers—but unfortunately they let us down.

We regret that this line is out of stock and the manufacturers tell us they have no plans to



make more.

Unfortunately we regret that we are at present out of stock of the make ordered.

### 7. valid

Our offer will remain valid for ten days.

We have instructed our bankers to open a letter of credit in your favour, valid until 15 September.

The import licence granted on June 17 is valid only up to 31 July.

### validity

Please extend the validity of L/C No.123 to February 28.

This agreement shall become null and void automatically upon expiration of its term of validity.

## Sentence Menu

### 1. Opening

- 1) Thank you for your letter of May 1,  
We have received your letter of May 1,  
asking if we sell photocopiers.  
inquiring about our range of plastic  
travel goods.  
concerning our catering equipment.
- 2) Thank you for your interest in our range of lightweight luggage. We shall be pleased to supply your requirements.

### 2. Confirming that you can help

- 1) We have a wide selection of sweaters that will appeal to all ages, and in particular the teenage market which you specified.
- 2) We can supply most items from stock and will have no trouble in meeting your delivery date.
- 3) Both grades are available in a wide range of self-colors and patterns; both carry a 3-year guarantee against fading.
- 4) We have the materials in stock and will ship them immediately when we receive your order.

### 3. Catalogues, price-lists, samples, and trade terms

- 1) We are pleased to  
enclose our latest price list for the goods  
you inquire about.  
fax you details of our emergency kit.  
quote you the best price.  
submit our lowest price.

- 2) We can allow/grant you a special discount of 2%

on orders exceeding \$6,000 in value.  
on repeat orders.  
on the prices quoted, for a quantity of  
60 or more.

- 3) The net price of this model is \$9, less 10% discount for quantities up to 100 and 15% discount for quantities over 100.  
4) Your initial order is subject to a special discount of 2%.  
5) We would like to draw your attention to the trade and quantity discounts we are offering in our publicity brochure pp.16–24, which may be of particular interest to you.  
6) As there is a heavy demand at this time of the year for heaters, you will have to allow at least six weeks for delivery.  
7) Before we can accept your order, we require a down payment of 5% of the total price.

#### 4. Suggesting alternatives

**If you do not have what the inquirer has asked for, but have an alternative, offer it to him. But do not criticize the product he originally asked for.**

- 1) The goods you inquired for are sold out, but we can offer you a substitute.  
2) While this machine has all the qualities of the model you asked for, it has the added advantage of being lighter, stronger and more durable.  
3) We no longer manufacture pure cotton shirts as their export prices tend to rise. All our garments are now poly-cotton, which is stronger, needs little ironing, and allows variations in pattern.

#### 5. Closing

- 1) I look forward to receiving your order.  
2) I hope that this information will help you.

- 3) Please contact me if you

need any further information.  
have any further questions.

- 4) Please reply as soon as possible

because we don't have sufficient stocks.  
since supplies are limited.

## Writing Tutorial

### Avoid Inflated Language

Using standard word choices and a professional style does not mean that your writing should be pompous or inflated. On the contrary, your word choices should lead to a pleasant style that

is flexible enough for most purposes. Some business writers think that heavy-handed writing will impress their readers; most likely, such writing will only irritate your readers and maybe confuse them as well.

Phrases such as “Per our conversation of March 5” and “Herewith please find enclosed” reveal a lack of originality and a dependence on phrases long out of date. If you want to save time and not sound as if you were writing in the 1800’s, delete inflated words and replace them with more conversational language.

The following is a list of some objectionable expressions that have no place in today’s modern business language.

| <b>Inflated</b>                                     |   | <b>Improved</b>                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------------|
| as per                                              |   | as indicated; as requested               |
| attached please find; attached hereto;              |   | attached is/are; we are attaching        |
| enclosed please find; enclosed herewith             |   | enclosed is/are; we are enclosing        |
| at this point in time                               |   | now                                      |
| due in large measure to                             |   | largely because of                       |
| in advance of; prior to                             |   | before                                   |
| in compliance with your request                     |   | as you requested                         |
| in the event that                                   |   | if                                       |
| in view of foregoing circumstances                  |   | therefore                                |
| it is incumbent on me                               |   | I must                                   |
| pursuant to                                         |   | in accordance <i>to/with</i> ; following |
| subsequent to                                       |   | after                                    |
| taking this factor into consideration               |   | therefore                                |
| The writer wishes to acknowledge                    | } | your letter of...;                       |
| We beg to acknowledge receipt of                    |   |                                          |
| We beg to thank you for                             |   |                                          |
| The favour of your early reply will be appreciated. | } | We look forward to your early reply.     |
| Awaiting the favour of your early reply, we remain  |   |                                          |

To write your business letters effectively, you should avoid using, as far as possible, roundabout, old-fashioned phrases that add nothing to the sense of your message. Plain, simple words will be more easily understood than long elaborate phrases. So write sincerely, simply and naturally as if you are having a conversation. Look at some sentence examples:

- Pursuant to your request, we are enclosing herewith a sampling of all colors available. (inflated)
- We enclose samples of available colors, as you requested. (better)
- We desire to acknowledge receipt of your letter of July 5, 19 --, in which you made inquiries concerning the warranty pertaining to your air conditioner. (inflated)
- As you requested on July 5, we enclose the terms of your air conditioner warranty. (better)

Critically look through the letters you have written for inflated words and expressions.

What you lose in pomposity and length, you gain in clarity. Jargon, excessive formality, and wordiness do not give writing authority. Natural, straightforward writing is always suitable.

## Communication Laboratory

### I. Choose the word(s) or phrase(s), if any, that would correctly complete each of the following sentences.

1. We wonder if you could \_\_\_\_\_ us a special discount of 5.5% on orders for 500 or above.  
A. offer  
B. allow  
C. effect  
D. grant
2. We are now enclosing a price list for all the items you \_\_\_\_\_ in your letter of May 26.  
A. required  
B. inquired  
C. said  
D. informed
3. We are sending you separately our latest catalogue with details of the various \_\_\_\_\_ we handle.  
A. ranges  
B. products  
C. models  
D. lines
4. For your information, our products enjoy a ready \_\_\_\_\_ in Europe.  
A. sell  
B. selling  
C. sale  
D. sail
5. Please note that the items marked with an asterisk \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. are in stock  
B. are available from stock  
C. are from stock  
D. can be supplied from stock
6. Although the articles you require are \_\_\_\_\_, we can offer you a substitute.  
A. sold up  
B. sold out  
C. out of stock  
D. heavily committed
7. If you are prepared to increase your \_\_\_\_\_ to 15%, we shall be pleased to purchase the complete stock.  
A. price  
B. discount  
C. sales volume  
D. cost
8. I would appreciate \_\_\_\_\_ me an up-to-date price list for your building materials.  
A. it if you would send  
B. that you would send  
C. you send  
D. your sending
9. As soon as we have \_\_\_\_\_ your catalogue, we shall contact you by fax.  
A. studied  
B. examined  
C. inspected  
D. researched
10. We should be most obliged if you would send us details of the lines you \_\_\_\_\_ for export.  
A. store  
B. stock  
C. have  
D. deal

**II. Correct the error(s), if any, in each of the following sentences.**

1. We acknowledge receipt of your letter of June 17, and have pleasure in advising you  
A B C  
that all your required items are in stock.  
D
2. Enclosed please find a price list for our products handled, together with detail  
A B C  
specifications and packing.  
D
3. We hope to receive your comments on the aforesaid models in early August in the  
A B  
event that you cannot reply prior to the end of this month.  
C D
4. We are interested in contacting a number of prominent manufacturers in your  
A  
country with a view to choosing lines suitable for the Spanish market.  
B C D
5. I will fax you at the beginning of next week to propose a mutual convenient arrangement.  
A B C D
6. We read interestingly your advertisement for plastic kitchenware in the current copy  
A B C D  
of House Furnishing Review.
7. Messrs. Brown & Clark of this city has informed us that you are exporters of laser printers.  
A B C D
8. The above quotations are understood on the basis of CIF net Karachi, but a discount  
A B  
by 5 % may be allowed if the quantity for each item reaches 1,000.  
C D
9. We wonder whether you can meet our present requirements. If your answer is in the  
A B C  
affirmative, please quote us at your best prices.  
D
10. We are airmailing you separately all set of samples and have confidence that you  
A B C  
will find them excellent in quality.  
D

### III. Fill in the blanks with the given verbs in their proper forms.

As we \_\_\_\_\_ (intend) to add a comprehensive bathtub section to each of our fifteen branches — so far we \_\_\_\_\_ (*only*, stock) a limited range in the furnishing departments — we \_\_\_\_\_ (decide) to approach the principal manufacturers and \_\_\_\_\_ (select) the best lines available at the most competitive prices.

We \_\_\_\_\_ (oblige) if you \_\_\_\_\_ (send) us details of your bathtubs, together with price lists and terms for bulk buying.

As soon as we \_\_\_\_\_ (examine) your catalogues, we \_\_\_\_\_ (contact) you for further details.

### IV. Arrange the following words and phrases in their proper order.

1. you will agree that,  
when you see our samples,  
and the high standard of craftsmanship,  
the quality of the material used  
to the most selective buyers,  
will appeal,  
we think that,
2. to meet your requirement,  
we are at present unable,  
though,  
to revert to the matter  
once our supplies are replenished,  
for the captioned articles,  
we shall be only too pleased,
3. and look forward to your first order,  
details of which,  
you will find in the catalogue,  
draw your attention to  
we should like to,  
such as stainless steel kitchenware,  
our other products,
4. steel tapes,  
at your request,  
we are now quoting you,  
CFR Lagos,  
at,  
1,000 dozen,  
USD5. -- per dz.  
for
5. considerably,  
at,  
are obviously superior in quality,  
lower prices,  
but our products,  
represent better value,  
our competitors,  
we are well aware that,  
and therefore,  
are quoting

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

1. 关于贵方1月12日的询购，我们高兴地通知你方，已另邮寄出目录及价目表供参考。
2. 然而，若贵方需了解其他情况，尽可通知我方。我们将乐于回答你们进一步提问。
3. 贵方会注意到我们的价格很有竞争力。我们所有型号均有大量现货，可承诺于收到信用证后一月内交货。
4. 如果贵方能让我们大致了解订货数量，可考虑给予更优惠的折扣。
5. 尽管我方不再供应SB-95型，我们备有SB-99型的现货，其性能更佳，价格更合理。

#### VI. Rewrite the following sentences.

1. We are eager to be expecting to make details of discussions on the trade terms you suggested soon.
2. By the end of this month, we hope to have your more information for reference with our buyers.
3. Your market possesses a steady demand of goods being of durable quality and moderate price. Our goods are just this kind of goods. You must know this condition.
4. We are unwilling to persuade you. We wish you would make an order. Because our supply is possible to become not enough soon.
5. It is no doubt that you compare our price with the one of other manufacturers. You will find our price is the favourable one.

#### VII. Write an English letter by making use of the ideas given below.

Your inquiry ---- our equipment ---- International Farm Machinery Fair in Bonn

specific questions ---- willing ---- substantial discount

terms of payment ---- sight L/C ---- initial

fulfill orders ---- three months ---- special specifications ---- a little longer

enclose ---- CIF Bangkok ---- equipment on pp.101-115 ---- particular interest ---- further information ---- contact us ---- supply

## Test Yourself

#### I. Give the Chinese equivalent of each of the following terms (10%).

- |                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. CPA                 | 2. bankrupt stock |
| 3. illustrated catalog | 4. DAP            |

- |                  |                        |
|------------------|------------------------|
| 5. price list    | 6. promotional novelty |
| 7. confirmed L/C | 8. CIP                 |
| 9. CWO           | 10. publicity brochure |

**II. Give the English equivalent of each of the following terms (10%).**

- |            |          |
|------------|----------|
| 1. 递盘      | 2. 消费品   |
| 3. 工厂交货    | 4. 最终用户  |
| 5. 货交承运人   | 6. 贸易条件  |
| 7. 净价      | 8. 报价单   |
| 9. 装运港船上交货 | 10. 超级市场 |

**III. Fill in each of the following blanks with a proper preposition (10%).**

- Much as we would like to conclude the transaction with you, we find a reduction \_\_\_\_\_ 10% is impossible.
- \_\_\_\_\_ your request, we are airmailing you our latest quotation sheet.
- We are pleased to inform you that the item you requested can be supplied \_\_\_\_\_ stock.
- The buyers are hesitating because they think that your price is \_\_\_\_\_ the high side.
- We can supply T-shirts in sizes ranging \_\_\_\_\_ S \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ XL.
- We shall be pleased to comply \_\_\_\_\_ any requirements that you may have.
- \_\_\_\_\_ a result of heavy commitments, we are for the time being unable to accept new orders.
- We have to take \_\_\_\_\_ consideration the rising cost of raw materials.

**IV. Find out and correct the mistake contained in each of the following sentences (10%).**

- The following goods are offered on a discount of 10%.
- Thank you for your letter of September 8 inquiring our electric heaters.
- We are sure you will find a ready selling for our products in your country.
- Would you send me price lists and catalogs for all products you store?
- We are at present out of the stock of the make ordered.
- Our offer will remain validity for 15 days.
- We will have no trouble in meeting with your delivery date.
- Please let us know if we may be further assistance.
- We are pleased to enclose a detail quotation for bathroom fittings.
- We will make this offer valid until December 31.

**V. Fill in the blanks with the given verbs in their proper forms and with modal verbs when necessary (10%).**

- The recent advance in the cost of raw materials \_\_\_\_\_ (compel) us to make a



- slight increase in the prices.
- A copy of our leaflet along with a price list and an operation manual \_\_\_\_\_ (*now*, send) to you by courier.
  - Besides those \_\_\_\_\_ (advertise) in the magazine, our catalog also \_\_\_\_\_ (enclose) \_\_\_\_\_ (show) various dresses and trouser suits you require.
  - We would be willing to offer you a special 2.5% discount if you could see your way to \_\_\_\_\_ (increase) your order to US\$100,000.
  - Should you \_\_\_\_\_ (decide) to place an order, you may use the order form \_\_\_\_\_ (attach) to the catalog.
  - As \_\_\_\_\_ (require) by our buyers, delivery \_\_\_\_\_ (make) within 45 days of receipt of order.

**VI. Choose the one word or phrase that correctly completes the sentence or that meets the requirement specifically set out (10%).**

- We \_\_\_\_\_ to receive detailed specifications of your latest models of motorcars.  
 A. shall be only too pleased      C. shall only be too pleased  
 B. shall be too pleased only      D. shall be pleased only
- On orders exceeding USD300,000, we will \_\_\_\_\_ a discount of 8%.  
 All of the following can suitably complete this sentence EXCEPT:  
 A. allow      C. offer  
 B. grant      D. quote
- We have faxed you our offer sheet, \_\_\_\_\_ our price list for the goods presently available.  
 A. attaching      C. mailing  
 B. enclosing      D. posting
- All of the following, except \_\_\_\_\_, are small thin books that give instructions or detailed information about a commodity or service offered.  
 A. booklet      C. leaflet  
 B. brochure      D. pamphlet
- Please note that our offer will remain valid until the end of this month.  
 The underlined word can be substituted for by all of the following EXCEPT:  
 A. firm      C. open  
 B. good      D. opened
- We have the goods in stock and can make delivery immediately we receive your firm order.  
 Which of the following can be used to replace the underlined word without changing the meaning of the sentence?  
 A. instantly      C. promptly  
 B. instantaneously      D. quickly



## Variety Forum

### The Cooperative Principle Versus the “Operative” Principle

The Cooperative Principle was introduced by Herbert Paul Grice (1913-1988), a well-known England-born philosopher. Though intended to describe how people normally behave in conversation, the principle, however, has been accepted as a prescriptive command by many, especially those specialists who study how people can achieve effective communication by obeying certain rules.

The Principle consists of the following four maxims, called Gricean Maxims:

1. **Maxim of Quality—Be Truthful**

Do not say what you believe to be false.

Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

2. **Maxim of Quantity—Quantity of Information**

Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).

Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

3. **Maxim of Relation—Relevance**

Be relevant.

4. **Maxim of Manner—Be Clear**

Avoid obscurity of expression.

Avoid ambiguity.

Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).

Be orderly.

All the instructions contained in these maxims are self-explanatory, and are obviously conducive to successful conduct of conversation, or oral communication.

As a fundamental type of business communication, business correspondence will become far more effective if the cooperative principle, as a whole, is flexibly applied by writers of business letters, depending on specific business occasions.

*Honesty is the best policy*, and the same is true of business dealings. A sincere businessperson will never provide any information even he himself / she herself believes to be false or unreliable. *Time is money* is another motto for almost every sensible businessperson. To include irrelevant information into a business letter will waste time, and energy also, of both the writer and the reader. Likewise, obscure or ambiguous messages will only result in the reader's misunderstanding of what the writer intends to communicate, and therefore subsequent clarification must be made. So, that means double time, or double money, is spent on a single job that would otherwise have been completed by half the time or money.

Despite the rightness of the entire principle, the implication of the Maxim of Quantity and/or the Maxim of Relation for business is sometimes arguable. For example, Mr. Iacona seems

to be interested in *Three Stars* compact discs only (Specimen Letter 2-2). In her reply (Specimen Letter 3-2), however, Ms. Ouyang tells him that she has attached a price list giving details of trade, quantity, and cash discounts on other products they have that Iacona does not inquire for. Of course, we won't think that the seemingly irrelevant quotation Ouyang has *contributed* is something *more informative than is required*. It's a sales representative's job to take full advantage of every single chance to push sales of the goods they can supply. In this sense, no contribution they make will be more informative than is required or will be irrelevant, so long as the contribution is operative. May we assume that in some specific business situation, the "operative" principle carries greater weight than the cooperative principle?

### Tips for you!

*The executive of the future will be rated by his ability to anticipate his problems rather than to meet them as they come.*

— Howard Coonley

*Anybody can cut prices, but it takes brains to produce a better article.*

— F. D. Armour

*The competitor to be feared is one who never bothers about you at all, but goes on making his own business better all the time.*

— Henry Ford

*Action without study is fatal. Study without action is futile.*

— Mary Beard