

Collins

English for Business

WRITING

Nick Brieger



NHÀ XUẤT BẢN TỔNG HỢP
THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH

NTV

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Nhân Trí Việt



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After a first degree in Law and an M.A. in Applied Linguistics, **Nick Brieger**'s early career included language training and teacher training in Eastern and Western Europe. In the 80s, he worked with teachers and trainers on developing communication skills programmes for managers in Poland, Hungary, Russia, Ukraine and Georgia. In the 90s, as the focus for global business moved towards Asia, he worked on programmes to develop English language competence for those wishing to follow an international career. In recent years, he has worked with a range of major public and private international organisations on communication, team building and intercultural training programmes. In addition to his training activities, he is the author of more than 20 books in the field of language, communication and culture.

Collins

English for Business Writing


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Introduction

Collins English for Business: Writing will help you to write more effective business documents in a more efficient way.

You can use *Writing*:

- as a self-study course
- as supplementary material on a business communication or business English course.

Writing will help you develop your **knowledge of** and **skills in** business writing. The book is divided into two main parts:

- 1 the elements of an **effective document**
- 2 the process of **efficient writing**

The starting point for the first part is a framework to introduce the core elements of effective documents: emails, reports, and minutes of a meeting. The second part helps you become more efficient by writing more clearly, more simply and more quickly.

Writing contains 20 units. These are arranged into six sections:

- 1 Who are my readers?
- 2 What structure and organisation for my document?
- 3 What tone for my readers?
- 4 What language for my document?
- 5 How do I write efficiently?
- 6 How do I put it all together?

At the back of the book there are:

- the Appendices
- a Glossary – this highlights the most difficult words from each unit giving definitions and further examples from the Collins COBUILD Advanced Dictionary
- the Answer key – providing model answers to the exercises

Unit structure

Each of the 20 units of *Writing* focuses on a separate feature of business writing. In order to develop your knowledge and skills, each unit provides:

- an introduction to the writing feature, explaining and demonstrating its relevance to business writing
- tasks to practise the specific feature of business writing.

In order to increase awareness of the international dimension of communication, each unit includes a short **cultural note**. This is intended to encourage reflection on the impact of culture on your business writing.

Using *Writing*

There are three ways to use this book:

- 1 Work through the units from 1–20
- 2 Choose from the Contents page (as trainer or learner) those units which correspond with your specific learning needs
- 3 Refer to Unit 20 to assess your personal learning needs

Study tips

For ease of use, each unit follows the same structure. It is recommended that you follow these steps when working through a unit:

- read through the first section which explains the writing feature and demonstrates its relevance to business writing
- work through the practice tasks
- compare your answers with the key
- regularly revise and go over what you have learnt

Language level

Writing has been written to help business learners at B2 level and above (Upper Intermediate to Advanced).

Other titles

Also available in the *Collins English for Business* series: *Listening* and *Speaking*.

1

Choosing the correct amount of information

I'm sorry I wrote you such a long letter; I didn't have time to write a short one. – Blaise Pascal (French theologian and mathematician)

The first step in writing a document is choosing the content. To do this effectively, ask yourself the following questions:

- 1 How much information does the reader actually need?
- 2 If you are asking for information, is your request concise so that the reader knows how to reply?
- 3 If you are giving information, is your message precise and easy to understand?

Using **correct language** is only a small part of effective writing; you need to think about the **appropriate information** for your document.

When writing professional documents, it is easy to include more information than is required. For example, when a specialist communicates with a non-specialist, the specialist may overestimate how much the non-specialist needs to know; or perhaps the specialist wants to show their expertise by giving a very full answer to a question, when a brief response would be better. Therefore it is important to spend time on **planning** the content of your writing before you start and **editing** the content of your document after you have written the first draft.

As a skill, writing requires more planning (before) and editing (after) than speaking. When you speak, you can check your listener's understanding by the feedback you receive. When you write, this feedback is less immediate, as it takes time for written communication to be exchanged.

Finally, we live in a world with easy access to enormous quantities of data. Make your readers' lives easier by converting the **data** into usable and useful **information**.

Useful tips

Planning

- What does my reader already know about this subject?
- How much information do they need to know?
- How can I present the information in a concise way so that it is easy to understand?

Editing

- Is there too much or too little detail for my reader?
- Is there any redundant information, e.g. repetition?
- Are there any gaps in the information which will make it difficult for the reader to understand?

1 Whether a document contains redundant information will depend on:

- 1 the writer's view of how much information the reader needs
- 2 the reader's view of their actual needs in terms of information

However, to encourage you to think about the right quantity of information for your reader, here are some expressions which give examples of redundant language. In each phrase, put brackets around the redundant word(s).

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 advance planning | 6 close proximity | 11 general public |
| 2 advance reservations | 7 difficult challenge | 12 past experience |
| 3 all meet together | 8 each and every | 13 reason is because |
| 4 basic fundamentals | 9 end result | 14 regular routine |
| 5 cheap price | 10 estimated roughly at | 15 unexpected surprise |

2 Read through the following email written by a computer maintenance company about a customer's problem with their computer monitor. In the email, find the following:

- a three examples of redundant information. Cross these out.
- b two examples of missing information. Put asterisks where this information should be.

To: jknowles@knowles.com
Subject: Returns
<p>Your reference: monitor XT3458</p> <p>Dear customer</p> <p>We have received your request to return the faulty monitor, which is not displaying the correct colours. We will process this as fast as possible. In order to provide a quick and reliable service, we kindly ask you to follow these instructions closely:</p> <p>Within the next twelve hours, you will receive two emails from GTS. In the first email you will find a link to a GTS return label. Please print out this label with a laser printer. With this number you can track the delivery status of your item on the Internet.</p> <p>Please pack your defective device into its original packaging. Afterwards please stick the return label clearly onto the box so that it is easily visible. When your parcel is ready for collection, please call GTS to arrange for collection.</p> <p>Make sure you pack your defective device in the original packaging! If you don't have the original packaging or any other secure packaging for transportation, contact us by email so that we can provide you with suitable packaging. Please let us know.</p> <p>Please only send in your defective LCD display together with its stand and the external power adapter (without its power cord). You will be charged for extra shipping costs in case we need to send back any accessories which you sent to us in error.</p> <p>Yours sincerely Electronic Computer Services</p>

3**Read the two job-related emails:**

- a** an email for a job in sales and marketing
- b** an email for an internship.

Look at the quantity of information in each document and decide if there is too much or too little.

a**To: seansmith@autosales.com****Subject: Application**

Dear Mr Smith

I am responding to your advertisement in *The Daily Observer* of 8 January 2011, regarding the Automotive Sales Representative position. Attached is my CV, showing my education, experience, and background.

As you will see from my CV, I graduated from the University of Watersville in 2007 with an upper second class honours degree in Business Administration. During my final year I was attracted to the areas of sales and marketing, and followed a three-term specialist course, which focused on:

- Fundamentals of Marketing
- Business Communications
- Fundamentals of Customer Care
- Managing Marketing Information Systems
- Promotional Practice
- Sales & Marketing Operations
- Promotional Practice Management
- Marketing Communication Strategy

My CV lists the jobs that I have held. As you will see, I worked as a trainee in the marketing department of Custom Visuals for two years (2007–2009), where I learned about advertising and organising promotional events. I was then promoted to the position of marketing executive, where I worked on planning and implementing advertising campaigns. However, after one year in that position, I decided to move to Q Cars, where I managed key accounts, especially in the area of car leasing. I learned a considerable amount about planning and organising events. After two years at Q Cars, I decided to move on and found a position as marketing manager for SpecTex, a specialist textile company. There I headed up a small sales team, as well as having responsibility for marketing activities in terms of product distribution. Throughout my sales and marketing career I have won top sales awards, and, in my last job, was involved in training other sales representatives in specific sales techniques to increase their sales. I hope my application will be of interest to you. I am available to come in for interview at a mutually convenient time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Mary Green