

Ein Taschen-Ratgeber aus der Reihe „**Business English**“  
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Presented by:

**Business English** *Today*

Souverän kommunizieren, verhandeln und präsentieren für Fach- und Führungskräfte

# Die wichtigsten Formulierungen für englische Geschäftsbriefe

**Sample phrases for the 50 most  
common letters and emails**

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## Dear Reader

If you want to succeed in business you have to be able to write effective business letters. The people you deal with in your business life have so many letters, emails and reports to read each day – they don't have time for anything that is badly written.

In addition, everything you write projects your professional image to you boss, colleagues, clients and prospective clients and suppliers.



This practical guide shows you how to write business letters that are direct and easy to read. Packed with useful phrases for the most common letters as well as the latest style and format guides for British and American English, you can adapt it to any business situation. Your business associates will enjoy reading your clear, professional language – they will know what you want them to do, and they will take action.

Use the information and the clear English phrases in this guide for your next business letters and see if there is a change in the responses you receive. I'm sure there will be!

With best regards

*Jean Lennox*

Jean Lennox  
Editor-in-Chief

### 1. Absage (Antwort auf eine Absage) / Refusal or cancellation, response

Thank you very much for your interest in our products. It is a pity that we were not able to win you as a customer, but we hope that you will come back to us in case of future need.

---

Thank you very much for your letter of (date). We are sorry that you have chosen another supplier.

---

It's a pity that we will have to do without you at our (event).

---

I'm so sorry you won't be able to make it to the (event).

---

### 2. Absage an Bewerber / Application turned down

Thank you very much for your application of (date) for the position of (secretary / system administrator). Unfortunately, we cannot offer you the position you are seeking, as we do not have any suitable vacancies at the moment.

---

Thank you very much for your application. While we were very positively impressed with your credentials and experience, we are sorry to tell you that we have chosen another candidate whose background more closely fits our requirements.

---

I'm sorry, but the position you have applied for has already been filled.

---

I wish you every success in your future career.

---

### 3. Anfrage / Inquiry

I am writing with reference to your advertisement for (product) in (newspaper / journal) of (date).

---

Your offer for (product) in (newspaper / journal) has caught our interest.

---

We are currently looking for (...). Have we come to the right address?

---

### 4. Antwort auf eine Anfrage / Inquiry: response

Thank you very much for your inquiry of (date).

---

We specialize in the type of goods you are looking for. I am enclosing material on a selection of our products which we feel will meet with your approval.

---

Thank you for your interest in our line of (products). I am delighted to send you our catalog with full details.

---

## 5. Angebot / Offer

In response to your inquiry of (date), we are pleased to offer you as follows: (details)

Thank you for your inquiry for 10 sets of King Cobra outdoor tables and chairs. We are currently having a sale on wood furniture and are therefore pleased to be able to offer you 10 sets (including 4 chairs each) at £xx a set (plus tax).

## 6. Antwort auf ein Angebot / Offer: response

Thank you for your prompt reply to our inquiry.

Your offer is just what we were hoping for. We would therefore like to order as follows: (...) We will expect delivery no later than (date).

Thank you for the trouble you took in making us your offer. I'm sorry, but we have chosen the offer made to us by a different supplier.

## 7. Anruf (zweiter) / Follow-up after phone call

As discussed on the phone, here are the contract details I promised to send.

Following your telephone inquiry this morning about a possible update to your insurance policy, I took the opportunity to put together several options for your convenience.

Thank you for calling this morning to let me know about the change in schedule.

Unfortunately we haven't been able to reach you by phone during the past few days. Here, therefore, is a brief update on our delivery situation.

## 8. Antwort (allgemein) / Reply (general)

Thank you for your letter of (date) about ...

In response to your inquiry of (date), we would like to ...

With reference to your offer of (date) ...

## 9. Auftragsbestätigung / Acknowledgment of an order

This is to confirm your order no. (number) for (type of products), conditions and delivery as per our offer of (date).

Thank you for your order of (date) for (number and type of products). Your order number is 123.

## 10. Auskunft / Information

We are planning to redesign our company trade fair stand and display. Could you please send me detailed information on the technical requirements and dimensions for stands at the upcoming "La Cuisine" trade fair?

---

I am glad to inform you that ...

---

Enclosed you will find the information you requested.

---

## 11. Begleitschreiben Zusendung Unterlagen / Cover letter for enclosures

Thank you for your inquiry of (date) for (our new line of kitchen appliances / products). I am enclosing our latest catalog and price list.

---

In response to your enquiry of (date), here is our seminar program for Winter / Spring 20..

---

I am enclosing the first draft of the project report. I'd be grateful if you could proofread it for me and make any necessary corrections.

---

## 12. Beratung / Advice and consulting

You have been recommended to me / us as a consultant with a great deal of expertise in (business / field).

---

We hope that you will be able to advise us with regard to (the correct procedure for ... / patent applications / ...).

---

Your advice on work-study programs in Canada was very helpful. Thank you very much.

---

## 13. Beschwerde / Complaint

Until recently, we were happy with the way your company handled our catering contracts. Twice in the past month, however, your service has been appalling, giving us cause for complaint.

---

I am writing today concerning a rather nasty encounter with one of your service engineers. (Name) was asked to repair our copier on (date). Not only did he arrive four hours later than he had said he would, but he also failed to clean up after he had finished. In addition, he was extremely rude.

---

I'm afraid that I have a complaint regarding the placement of our stand at the recent trade fair.

---

Unfortunately, the goods we received from you were in poor condition – again. I'm sure you will appreciate that we cannot accept deliveries of such unreliable quality.

---

#### **14. Antwort auf eine Beschwerde / Complaint adjustment**

We were very distressed to hear of the poor service you were subjected to (at event / on date). We deeply regret the incident. Please accept our sincere apologies.

---

I was sorry to learn of the inconvenience you were caused by the unfortunate placement of your stand in a draft. I can fully appreciate your dissatisfaction. Unfortunately, we did not know in advance what trouble the air circulation might cause, as this was the first fair to take place after remodeling.

---

Thank you for bringing the poor quality of our last consignment to our attention. We are unsure as to what caused the damage and would therefore be grateful if you would send us the consignment in question in its original packaging so that we can have the damage surveyed and analyzed. There may be a problem in packaging which we will need to resolve here. In the meantime, please accept my apologies for the inconvenience. Would you like us to send replacements of the same type and quantity?

---

#### **15. Bestätigung / Acknowledgement Confirmation**

I am pleased to confirm our appointment for Monday, 10 March from 9 am to 12 noon at our headquarters here in Düsseldorf.

---

To whom it may concern: We are glad to confirm that Mr. Paul Evian, born 16 May 1975 in Toulouse, is a clerk / engineer / salesman in our employ. He has been working for us since (date). We confirm that he works no more than 20 hours a week / this contract is valid through (date).

---

#### **16. Bestätigung einer Kündigung / Confirmation termination of contract**

We have received your notice terminating your contract / lease / insurance policy (no. and title) as of (date).

---

This is to confirm the termination of your contract / lease / insurance policy (no. and title). Your coverage is subject to expire on (date).

---

#### **17. Bestellung / Order**

Your offer has convinced us. We wish to order (quantity, product) for immediate delivery to (address).

---

Unfortunately, we are rather pressed for time. Could you possibly provide us with (quantity, product) for delivery by (date)? We would really appreciate it.

---

### 18. Bitte / Request

We are writing to you in the hope that you will be able to help us. We are looking for ...

---

I wonder whether you might be able to help me find some information I need quite urgently.

---

### 19. Dank für Kauf / Thanks for purchase

Thank you for your visit on (date) and for the trust you place in our products.

---

Thank you for choosing your (product) in our store. You will also find any batteries and spare parts you might need here at extremely competitive prices.

---

### 20. Einladung / Invitation

(Company) cordially invites you to attend its Annual Summer Festival.

---

It gives us great pleasure to invite you to be our guest at the 17th annual (company) golf tournament.

---

On 25 March (company) will be celebrating its 50th anniversary. Please join us in celebrating this happy day.

---

I understand that you will be in Friedrichshafen for the BOOT this year. If you have the time, would you like to take the opportunity to come and visit us?

---

### 21. Entgegenkommen / Concessions

Thank you for your openness in coming forward to explain the situation to us. We will be happy to concede what we can. After some deliberation, we may have found a way out. Let me suggest the following: ...

---

In your letter of (date) you request payment in full without further delay. I am afraid that, due to the difficult market situation, we are currently unable to pay our debt in full. We are therefore asking you to concede us an extended payment period to allow us to clear this debt. We would like to suggest the following: ...

---

Thank you very much for granting us an extra month to pay our debts to you. We appreciate your willingness to meet us halfway.

---

You have asked us for a discount. What we can offer you is a discount on bulk orders for over 500 pieces.

---

## 22. Entschuldigung / Apology

I am writing to apologize for ...

---

I am afraid that there was mix-up at our end, and we sent the package to the wrong address. I apologize for this unfortunate mistake on our part.

---

We apologize for the delay in settling your invoice no. (123) dated (date). Payment has been delayed because (of an error in accounting / of an oversight on our part / we have run into financial difficulties).

---

Owing to unforeseen difficulties, we regret that we will be unable to (process your order no. 234 / settle invoice no. 234) as agreed. We hope to (solve the problem / be able to deliver the goods / settle our account) by (date) at the latest. Please accept our apologies.

---

## 23. Fragen / Questions

Your offer for (product) looks very interesting. Perhaps you can supply us with answers to the following questions: ...

---

The rough draft is finished. Now there are just a few open questions we need to discuss: ...

---

## 24. Geschäftsauflösung / Announcement business closure

We regret to inform you that after 23 years, (company) is going out of business. We will be closing our doors for the last time on (date).

---

## 25. Geschäftseröffnung / Announcement of opening

We are pleased to announce the opening of our new offices at (address).

---

Good news! (Company) has just opened its new offices in (city). And we have lots of special offers for you to help us to celebrate.

---

## 26. Gespräch (Bezug auf Gespräch) / Follow-up and preparation for next meeting

Thank you for having found the time to meet me on (date).

---

Our conversation on (date) was very helpful. Since then, I have been able to get further information about ...

---

It was a pleasure talking to you on (date). I'm enclosing a short summary of some of the points we discussed.

---

Thank you for taking the time to meet me on (date). I am enclosing a brief agenda for our next meeting. Perhaps you could go through it and make any necessary changes.

---

### 27. Gute Nachrichten / Announcing good news

We are very pleased to announce...

---

We are delighted to confirm that...

---

You will be pleased to hear that...

---

Have we got news for you! ...

---

### 28. Jubiläum / Congratulations anniversary

We would like to congratulate you on the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of your company. Let me take the opportunity to thank you for our excellent, long-standing business relationship.

---

On this day you can look back with pride on 20 years in which you shaped (company) into the leading company in the business. Congratulations on your remarkable achievement.

---

### 29. Konflikt / Conflict and disagreement

I am writing in connection with our order no. ZU04/69. It was my impression that we had agreed upon 1 March as the delivery date when we phoned. However, your order confirmation of (date), gives 1 April as the date of delivery. I'm afraid this would be much too late for us.

---

I have the impression that we are talking at cross purposes. I am convinced, however, that we can sort it out. It seems to me that we need to ... (action). Do you think you can agree to that?

---

I'm afraid that we find the tone of your last letter quite unacceptable. As we wish to resolve this conflict in a mutually satisfactory manner, I would suggest either that you put us in touch with someone else in your organization who can handle the matter, or that we call in an arbitrator.

---

I received your letter this morning and am sorry to hear that you cannot accept our terms. Shall we submit the matter to an arbitrator?

---

### 30. Kündigung / Termination of contract

This is to advise you that you are being laid off in compliance with Article XVI, section 2 of your labor contract.

---

This is to tender my resignation from (company) as of 1 December.

---

I am writing to inform you that I wish to terminate my insurance with you as of 1 January. This puts me well within the stipulated period.

---

We were always very satisfied with your support. As we will be migrating to a new integrated system, however, we shall no longer need your services. We therefore wish to terminate our service contract with you as of 1 September.

---

During the past months we have had to complain several times to you about the quality of your services, but to no avail. We therefore see no alternative but to terminate our contract with you, effective 15 April. This takes into account the statutory period of 4 weeks from date of cancellation.

---

### 31. Lieferschwierigkeiten / Delivery problems

Thank you for your order for (item 1). Unfortunately, this item is no longer available as production was discontinued some years ago. May we suggest supplying the (item 2), an updated version of the (item 1), selling for (price)?

---

Unfortunately, we are having some difficulty filling your order no. ZU786. We are short of article no. 1233 due to a bottleneck in production / unforeseen demand.

---

I'm afraid that your order no. NZ678 will reach you a few days late. We understand from our forwarding agents that the goods are being held at customs for security clearance. This seems to be a consequence of the new stringent safety regulations.

---

### 32. Mahnung (1. Mahnung) / Collection letter: initial reminder

According to our records, our invoice no. 81/6789 of (date) has not been settled. The enclosed copy shows an outstanding amount of (amount).

---

This is to remind you that invoice no. 81/6789 of (date) for (articles) is overdue.

---

I'm afraid that invoice no. AD4218 of (date) is still owing, making it more than 60 days overdue.

---

**Phillip Godall and Sons**  
**72 Oldham Road**  
**Manchester M10 0RN**  
**www.goodall.co.uk.**  
**info@goodall.com**  
**Telephone no. 1234567**



13 December 20..  
JG:cs

**Urgent**  
Mary Hogan  
Purchasing Manager  
Morton's Pharmacy  
28 Nazareth Road  
Newton Heath  
M18 0RP

Dear Ms Hogan

**Confirmation of your order 123 of 1 December 20..**

Many thanks for your order. It is now being processed and our despatch department will send it to you within the next 10 days. I trust the goods will arrive safely and punctually and that they will meet your expectations. As requested, I am enclosing terms of sale and payment. I have also arranged for our sales representative, Tim Harding, to contact you.

It was a pleasure to do business with you and I hope we have the chance to serve you again in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Josh Greenblatt  
Senior Sales Representative

Enclosure: Catalogue 20..  
Copy: Tim Harding, Sales Representative North West of England, Bill Jones, Sales Manager

## These are the different parts of a business letter

### 1 – Letterhead

Your company's name and contact details

### 2 – Date

British English (BE) day month year (no punctuation),  
American English (AE) month day, year (comma after day)

### 3 – Reference initials

The initials of the persons who dictated and typed the letter

### 4 – Special mailing notifications

Such as urgent, airmail, registered mail, personal, confidential

### 5 – Inside address

Name, position and company of person you are writing to

### 6 – Greeting

Find out how to write proper greetings in BE and AE on page 16

**Phillip Godall and Sons**  
72 Arlington Road  
Winnington, NC 28401  
www.goodall.com  
info@goodall.com  
Tel.: 1234567



December 13, 20..

**Urgent**

Nancy Lewis  
Purchasing Manager  
Morton's Pharmacy  
28 Nazareth Road  
Wilmington, NC 20139

**Confirmation of your order 123 of December 1, 20..**

Dear Ms Lewis:

Many thanks for your order. It is now being processed and our despatch department will send it to you within the next 10 days. I trust the goods will arrive safely and punctually and that they will meet your expectations.

As requested, I am enclosing our terms of sale and payment. I have also arranged for our sales representative, Tim Harding, to contact you.

It was a pleasure to do business with you and I hope we have the chance to serve you again in the near future.

Sincerely,

Josh Greenblatt  
Senior Sales Representative

Enclosure: Catalog 20..

Copy: Tim Harding, Sales Representative North Carolina  
JG:cs

**7 – Subject line**

BE after greeting, AE before or after greeting

**8 – Body of letter**

Always starts with a capital letter

**9 – Complimentary close**

Yours sincerely / faithfully and so on. Find out how to write perfect greetings and complimentary closes on page 16

**10 – Signature and printed name**

With title and position

**11 – Information about enclosures**

Don't shorten to "enc." if there are more than one, write "Enclosures", then list them

**12 – Copies**

Write the names in alphabetical order

### 33. Mahnung (2. Mahnung) / Collection letter: 2nd reminder

Perhaps it has slipped your notice that the above-mentioned invoice of (date) for (amount) is still outstanding. This is our second letter to you in this connection. We cannot imagine why you have not paid.

---

### 34. Mahnung (3. / letzte Mahnung) / Collection letter: final demand

This is our third and final reminder concerning our invoice no 81/6789 of (date), which unfortunately has yet to be paid.

---

We're still waiting for payment of invoice no 998/67 dated 1 June for (amount) We would like to give you a last opportunity to settle this account amicably, without legal proceedings.

---

### 35. Mängel / Complaint about quality

Unfortunately we have to let you know that lately we have not been very satisfied with your service.

---

I know that you have done your best time after time to keep the (...) machine in good repair. However, it hasn't been working properly for three months now, resulting in poor quality and a great deal of down time. Our service contract states that the machine will be kept operational at all times. We therefore can simply not accept your service as fulfillment of contract.

---

We really don't like to complain, but we simply cannot resell the goods we received from you today. Their quality is clearly substandard.

---

### 36. Nachfrage zu einem Angebot / Offer, open questions

I am sending you our offer to tender under separate cover. It is quite a technical document, and I can imagine that you will have some questions. Please call me if there is anything I can explain.

---

There are just one or two points in your offer that I would like to ask you about. Could you please clarify what you mean by ...?

---

I'm not quite sure I understand what you mean by "... ."

---

When you write "...," are you talking about "...?"

---

### 37. Nachfrage zu einer Lieferung / Delivery, conditions

There one stipulation in our order that I would like to point out, as it is of particular importance to us.

---

I am writing in connection with the delivery of our order no. XYZ. Could you call me giving the exact time of expected delivery? I am often out of the office and need to plan accordingly.

---

### 38. Nachlieferung / Delivery, delayed

Our forwarders have informed us that you should receive the delayed consignment today. Thank you for allowing us to hold back shipment until we could complete your order with the outstanding batch of goods.

---

Your order is now en route to you and should arrive on (date).

---

### 39. Schlechte Nachrichten / Announcing bad news

We regret to inform you that ...

---

I am afraid that ...

---

Unfortunately ...

---

I'm sorry, but ...

---

### 40. Schreibfehler / Mistake/typing error, apology

Unfortunately, a printer's error crept into our offer of (date). I'm afraid we must correct the offer as follows: ...

---

I'm afraid I sent you an erroneous update on (date). Pages 11 and 12 contained errors. I am enclosing the correct version of these pages.

---

In our offer / letter / brochure of (date) we wrote in error that ... To set the record straight: ...

---

### 41. Service / Service

We guarantee that you will be pleased with our service. We offer all the conveniences: delivery within 24 hours, offices in all major cities, a 24 hour helpline for your convenience and much more.

---

We want you to enjoy your new (product) for many years to come. That's why we offer routine maintenance service checks free of charge.

---

### 42. Terminverschiebung / Postponing an appointment

I am writing with reference to the meeting we had planned for (date). Unfortunately, something very urgent involving one of my major accounts has come up, and I am afraid I will have to postpone our appointment to a later date. I am very sorry!

---

I'm sorry, but I'm afraid I won't be able to make our meeting on Tuesday. Our entire logistics department will be on an SAP training course that day, and I will be staying in the office for them. Could we possibly bring the meeting forward and meet a day earlier, on Monday, at the same time?

---

#### 43. Verspätung, Nachfrage / Delay, query

On (date) we placed an order for (products), due for delivery on (date). Our order still hasn't arrived. Could you please look into the matter for us?

---

I am writing to remind you of our (agreement / conversation) of (date), in which you (offered / promised / agreed) to send me (information / a progress report / your sales figures for the third quarter). Quite possibly you have forgotten that you wanted to send it / them to me no later than (date).

---

Could it be that you have forgotten about my request for an update?

---

#### 44. Verspätung, Antwort / Delay, answer

Thank you for informing us that the goods you ordered have not yet arrived.

---

We are sorry to note the delay in delivery of your order number XYZ. The delay is a result of (an error / a misunderstanding / an oversight on our part / a strike by the French truckers / an export ban on this class of goods / the sudden illness of the responsible technician / a bottle-neck in production / a rush of incoming orders / a change in customs regulations).

---

Thank you for reminding me to send you the (update / report). I'm so sorry, I forgot about it completely in the rush of work. I'll get it out to you tomorrow morning, so you should have it by Thursday at the latest.

---

#### 45. Vorschlag / Suggestion

Here is our suggestion for (the design of your company brochure / the agenda of our next meeting).

---

We would like to suggest the following for (optimizing your IT network / redesigning your kitchen): ...

---

You requested some suggestions for improving process flow in your accounts department. We see three possible approaches: ...

---

We have come up with a few suggestions for ... . What do you think of ...?

---

#### 46. Werbebrief / Sales letter

Now that Christmas is approaching fast, it's time to find that special present for (your parents / loved ones / business partners).

---

Did you know that (most business owners / 20 % of all Europeans...).

---

Lower your heating costs by up to 30%! We offer...

---

#### 47. Zahlungseingang / Payment received

Too much: We have received your remittance of of €100. Although we are pleased about all incoming monies, we would like to point out that you have, in fact, remitted too much to our account, the due amount being €80.

---

Too little: We have received your remittance of (£ amount). Unfortunately, there is an amount of (£ amount) still outstanding in your account, as the amount billed was (£ amount).

---

Order number missing: Today we received a remittance of (£ amount) from you. In order to be able to book this to your account, we need you to give us (the following information: ... / the order number).

---

Down payment: Thank you for your down payment / first installment of (£ amount), which we received on (date). It is now our pleasure to (deliver your car / confirm your lease) as stated in our agreement of (date).

---

#### 48. Zusage / Acceptance

Thank you for our pleasant interview/conversation on (date) and your kind offer. Let me put in writing, as promised, my decision: Yes, I will be happy to join your company.

---

I like to think back to (the happy hours / the fantastic buffet) at your (last birthday party). I certainly wouldn't want to miss it this year.

---

Thank you for your invitation. I will be delighted to attend.

---

#### 49. Zusammenarbeit / Cooperation

Today we were awarded the contract for (project) by (client / customer). We would like to work on this project in cooperation with you.

---

We provide services in (business) and are currently seeking to expand our service spectrum. In this context we are looking for partners in the area of (specialized area). You have been recommended to us ...

---

Good is simply not good enough for us. We are therefore offering you new expanded services in cooperation with (partners) to (improve a certain area: provide you with a new overnight delivery service).

---

## 50. Zwischenbescheid / Acknowledging application

We are still in the process of selecting candidates for the position you have applied for.

Some things take longer than expected. We unfortunately have not yet been able to evaluate all of the candidates who applied for the position.

You will certainly want to know the status of your application.

### Der Business English Today Tipp:

Bevorzugte **amerikanische** Schreibweise: inquiry, inquire, catalog, program, dispatch, specialize.

Bevorzugte **britische** Schreibweise: enquiry, enquire, catalogue, programme, despatch, specialise.

## How to write greetings and complimentary closes for letters and emails

British		American	
Greeting	Complimentary close	Greeting	Complimentary close
<b>If you don't know the name of the recipient (formal)</b>			
Dear Sir or Madam Dear Sir Dear Madam	Yours faithfully	Ladies and Gentlemen:	Sincerely yours,
<b>If you know the name of the recipient (formal)</b>			
Dear Ms Smith Dear Mrs Smith Dear Mr Smith	Yours sincerely	Dear Ms. Smith: Dear Mrs. Smith: Dear Mr. Smith:	Yours truly,
<b>If you know the recipient personally (less formal)</b>			
Dear Kathy Dear Robert	Regards Best regards	Dear Amanda: Dear Joe:	Regards, Warm regards, Best wishes
<b>If you know the recipient personally (informal, only for emails)</b>			
Dear Sarah Billy	All the best Cheers See you	Dear Bill: Francis:	All the best See you Take care

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# Die wichtigsten Formulierungen für englische Geschäftsbriefe

Sample phrases for the 50 most  
common letters and emails

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