

Job Application Letters

For Better Or For Worse





The Sales Process

Why do we call it a Sales Process?

Four steps to success -

- Attract reader's attention
- Create desire for services
- Convince reader service is good
- Motivate action



The Job Posting

- At any given moment how many people are looking at Internet job postings in addition to you?

200,000

- How many responses does the typical newspaper or Internet posting draw?

300-600

- How many are immediately screened out by the recruiter?

85-90%

So....



The Job Ad Analysis

- Is it okay to apply to a job, even though you don't have all the requirements?
- The standard guideline is that you should meet 80% of the criteria in the posting before you apply.
- Note the “style” of the job posting.
- Think like a marketer – target your information to each specific customer.



The Job Ad Analysis

First step: analyze the job posting

Helps you to

- “Market” yourself properly and ensure that your application gets read
- Target your application letter and your resume for the specific job posting



The Job Ad Analysis

- Use the job ad analysis form to list key details of the posting
- Use these “key words” and details in your letter and your resume
- Then, the electronic scan will not reject your application! and
- The employer will know you want this specific job!



Why a Job Application Letter?

- Most employers read letter first
- Speaks to individual
- Leads reader to resume
- Confirms good first impression
- Highlights your strengths in terms of benefits to reader



The Reception of Your Letter

- *What determines the impression your letter makes?*
- *Three factors:*
 - Initial impression and appearance
 - The first few sentences of the letter
 - Establishes your individuality



The Tone of the Letter

- Self-confident, mature :”I can solve your problem”
- Sound interested and somewhat eager, but not fawning
- Don’t give impression you must have the job, but don’t seem uncaring
- Avoid arrogance and humility
- Try to avoid starting every sentence with “I”



Questions to ask yourself

- ...before drafting the letter:
 - What do I want the reader to think/feel/do after reading my letter?
 - What facts will my reader need?
 - Do I have the person's name and title?



The Traditional Opening

- Always starts with your information:
 - Complete mailing address
 - Can include e-mail address

BUT

No name as header

No phone number in header –

You are not a company with a letterhead!



The Salutation

- Always address to a specific person
- Use official title
- OR - to someone in authority - will redirect

BUT NEVER SAY

~~“To whom it may concern”~~



Content

- Gives source of knowledge about ad
- Be specific about job being applied for
- Can refer to enclosed resume
- Strive to be distinctive
- Indicate knowledge of company, employer
- Subtle flattery for company never hurts
- Name dropping: connection?



Content

- Education, work experience
- Analyze the ad
- Most important (to employer) goes first
- Focus on employer's needs, concerns



Content

- Describe some appropriate aspect of college program : courses, skills
- Discuss skills learned at college and in previous jobs – actions, achievements
- Must be specific and brief
- Opportunity to reveal transferable skills and how they relate



Content

- Must try to answer as many requirements from posting as possible
- Speak to your best, most relevant
- Must be concise and powerful, enthusiastic, self-confident
- Must be specific:

“Show me, don’t tell me”

Make claims and support with hard evidence



Supporting Your Claims

- NOT THIS: a lot of experience
- BUT THIS: four years of experience

- NOT THIS: I was a good team player
- BUT THIS: I was the team leader on Project X, which accomplished Y



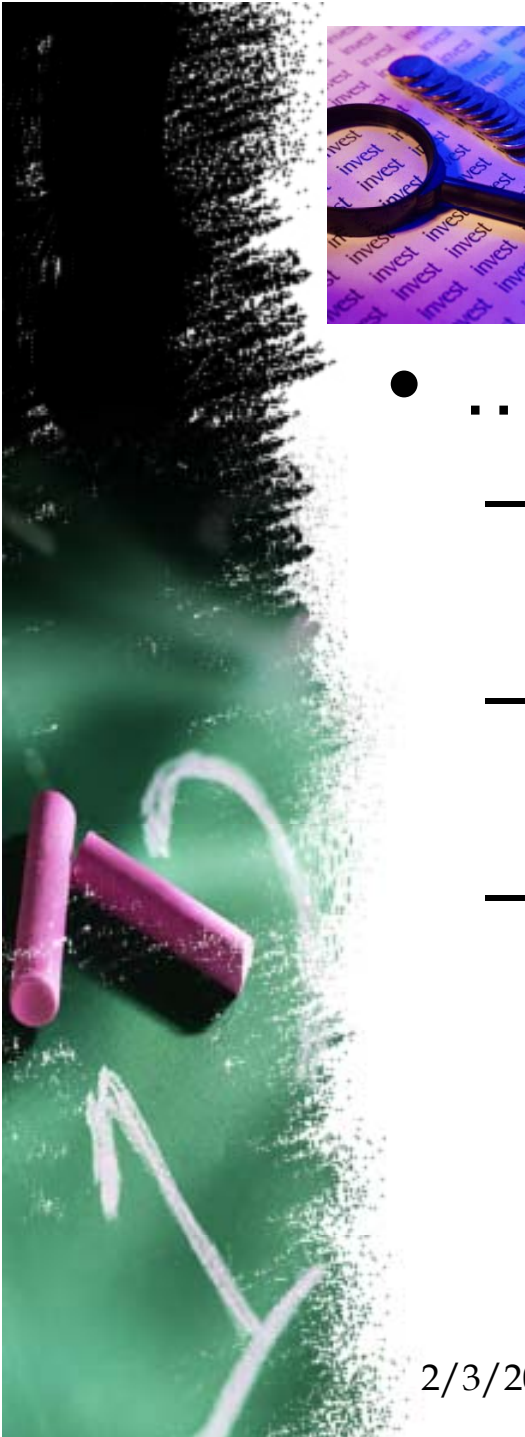
Active Instead of Passive Voice

- Passive: my diploma was received
- Active: I earned my diploma
- Passive: My job experiences have allowed me to...
- Active: I took advantage of my previous position to...



Content

- Urges action on the part of the reader
- “at your convenience”
- Contact info.
- Attached resume
- Reviews benefits to employer
- Restates your enthusiasm and interest
- Thanks employer for considering you



Questions to ask yourself

- ...after drafting your letter:
 - How will my reader react to what I have written?
 - What impression of me will the reader get from my letter?
 - Did I write my letter with confidence?



Editing and Proof Reading Your Letter

- **CHECK:**

- If necessary, did you include subject line and competition number?
- Do you have an interesting opening line?
- Did you make minimal use of “I”, particularly at beginning of sentences?
- Did you include your handwritten signature?



Mailing the Letter and the Resume

- Do not fold or staple: Why?
- Mail flat
- Use an 8.5 x 11 envelope
- Fax: needs cover
- Always send hard copy as well
- Always follow up with a phone call
- Time deadline?



Employers' Pet Peeves about Letters

- More than one page long (unless required)
- Coloured paper
- Mechanical mistakes
- Handwritten corrections
- Discussing old jobs that don't mean anything
- Poor quality paper
- Photocopy of a photocopy



Employers' Pet Peeves

- “Your letter (and resume) must communicate talent, accomplishment and judgment.”
- “Neatness counts: proofread, proofread, and proofread again!”
- “Sloppiness in a letter or resume is a warning flag in front of any prospective employer. Until a person walks in the door, a letter and a resume are all we have to go on.”



The Thank You letter

- Not always a letter: e-mail, voice mail
- Send within 48 hours after interview
- Why?
- Definitely makes you stand out from the crowd
- Way to connect again to interviewer