



# CHAPTER 13

## COVER LETTER DESIGN:

### Purpose – Content – Techniques

#### How do I match my cover letter with my resume?

*The purpose of the cover letter is to request an interview, not to get an offer.*

Cover letters serve as introductory sales letters to potential employers. They almost always accompany resumes. A good cover letter motivates the potential employer to read the attached resume and subsequently invite you to interview for the position you are seeking.

Many employers receive hundreds of cover letters and resumes each day. Most employers can interview only a small fraction of the people who write requesting interviews. Employers use cover letters as the first screen in deciding how to respond to job applicants. With larger employers, many cover letters with attached resumes arrive via e-mail.

Only a few carefully worded letters stand a chance of getting through an employer's one-minute screening maze. Yet, every day this method accounts for hundreds of actual hires. Certain well-planned strategies and meticulous letter writing techniques increase your odds of obtaining an interview.

The ultimate purpose of a cover letter is to motivate an employer to invite you for a job interview. A good cover letter introduces you to the employer and shows why you are one of the best candidates applying for a job with the organization.

As with a resume, a cover letter is not designed with the goal of obtaining a job offer initially. All you want the cover letter to do is help you get your foot in the door.

To a degree, the cover letter expands upon the resume, but it also does one additional thing. It adds personal flavor to your approach. The cover letter brings the resume to life by pointing out that there is a real live person contacting the employer on a personal basis. The cover letter is more than a bland piece of paper.





### Cover Letter Design

Attention  
+  
Job Objective  
+  
Qualifications  
+  
Achievements  
+  
Interests  
+  
Motivation  
+  
Personality  
+  
Aggressive Close

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= equals =

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## Results

Figure 13.1

A good cover letter represents you as a warm, pleasant, talking human being who is seeking a more personal conversation. The cover letter says, "Let's be friends." It goes beyond saying, "I need a job from you." The tone should be one of modest confidence.

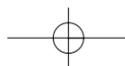
Unfortunately, most cover letter writers have difficulty in communicating personal warmth. Most cover letters simply repeat the information that is on the resume, so they fail to achieve a greater purpose than resumes without cover letters would.

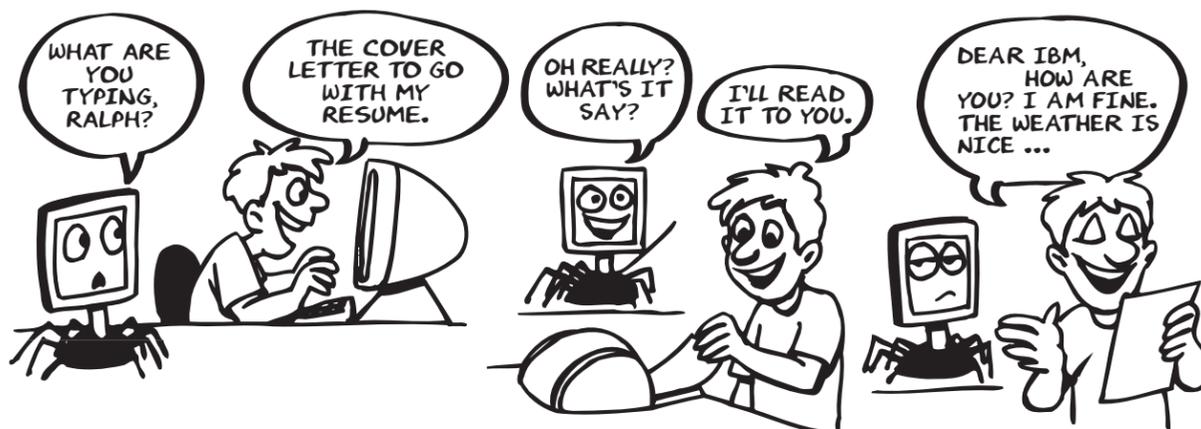
Designing an effective cover letter requires finesse. Your poise, polish, and maturity stand out to the degree that you have those qualities and the ability to communicate in written form.

Later, you will use networking and the Internet to determine your distribution list. A quality cover letter is the first priority. Technology will greatly help with broadcasting both your cover letter and resume.

Developing the right touch is an art, and it may take hours of planning time to achieve the ideal wording. As with most employment methods, certain well-thought-through techniques and strategies can improve the chances of the cover letter achieving its planned purpose.

*A good cover letter indicates a personal warmth not found in the resume.*





Is an e-mail cover letter appropriate? Although it is not personal nor formal, the trend is making e-mail cover letters much more acceptable. If the job lead resulted from a website, e-mail inquiry, or ad that requested e-mail, then it is appropriate. Otherwise, stick with the more acceptable snail mail, especially with smaller size employers.

## Planning Ideas

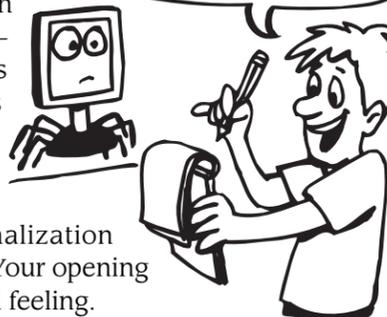
A planned series of events starts the approach to effective cover letter writing. Who should receive the cover letter? How do you locate the right contact? Once you know which contact is the decision-maker, how do you move that person to do what you want?

A cover letter is a perfectly word processed document like a resume. Use your spell and grammar checkers before printing. Print on a very high quality laser or ink jet printer. Individually sign each letter after it's printed. Add a signature block, if you use e-mail, at the bottom of your e-mail.

**Personalize.** Personalizing the cover letter helps it get read. Few employers respond positively to letters addressed to "Sir" or "Madam." There is no personal reason for sir or madam to respond. If "Mr. Jones" receives a letter, however, responsibility for some type of reply is established with him.

Personalizing cover letters means that they must be individually typed and personally signed by you. Mass-produced letters rarely get more than "form letter 13" replies. Crafting the right words, not repeating the info in the resume, captures the reader's attention.

A letter implies a time commitment on your part, which most recipients appreciate. An accepted norm in our society is that one courtesy deserves another. It is psychologically more difficult for an employer to respond to a personal letter with a form reply. Although many employers will still not reply, personalization increases your odds of receiving a reply. Your opening must create this honest, sincere, personal feeling.



**Uniqueness.** Another strategy is to create a unique setting in your letter so that a form reply will not be sufficient. There are several techniques for doing this.

The idea is to force the employer to write or dictate a personal letter back to you. If you can accomplish this, the likelihood of an interview is enhanced.

A letter that causes an employer to become interested in seeing what type of person you are increases your chances of getting an interview. Make your letter stand out from the run-of-the-mill cover letters. Usually, a statement of qualifications alone will not accomplish this.

Mentioning unusual experiences or interests, or employing a different writing style may interest the employer. Remember that these interests must be job related in order to appeal to the employer. Create a relationship with the employer (or networking partner).

**Target.** A cover letter written in a manner that shows a special reason for wanting to work for the particular employer stands a better chance of special consideration. A strategy that implies “I really want to work for you above all others” appeals to the employer’s loyalty to his or her organization.

A letter that shows ties between your background and this particular employer enhances your chances of success.

**Enthusiastic.** Employers like outgoing, enthusiastic people. A positive, enthusiastic tone in a cover letter is contagious.

Enthusiastically written letters say, “I like you!” and imply to the employer that the feeling is mutual. This type of initial rapport can inspire the employer to contact you.

*Establish a personal relationship with the reader that says that we have mutual interests.*

## Construction Techniques

These strategies are broad concepts, and translating the above ideas into real words on a piece of paper can be difficult. No single letter can fit everyone.

The cover letter must be written by you with a great deal of contemplation. There are certain techniques that can aid in the writing of effective cover letters. Long cover letters bore their readers.

The employer’s goal is to sort through the day’s mail (or e-mail) searching for people whose backgrounds would most effectively help the organization.

Only a few seconds are available for rapidly screening the day’s mail. The longer the letter, the less likely it becomes that it will get its few key points across to the busy employer. If a word resume is attached to an e-mail, there will always be some hesitancy to open it based on virus scares. The cover letter design thus becomes even more important.





## Conciseness

A cover letter must be a personally prepared, one page letter. It should be printed on high-quality personalized stationery or high-quality 8.5 × 11 inch bond paper.

At the maximum, a good cover letter rarely goes beyond five paragraphs of three to five complete sentences each. The sentences, unlike those in the resume, must be grammatically perfect. Many of the techniques you employed in designing the resume also should be used with the cover letter.

The key idea in both cases is to show “accomplishment.” A hard-hitting statement of accomplishments can illustrate very important subjective factors, which are normally evaluated only in an interview.

The subjective factors are best discussed in an interview, but incorporating them into the cover letter encourages the employer to follow up with an interview. Ask yourself: will this factor help the recruiter decide to interview you? If yes, use the subjective factor.

*Excite the Reader!*

## Key Words Matter

With such limited space, every word must count. Extraneous words and cliches must be eliminated. Every word must be analyzed for its contribution to your objective. Does this word create the impression you want? Does that word say positive things? Can a word be substituted there that has a broader meaning? Have you used words that seem to expand meanings?

The impression you leave depends upon the words you use. You obviously must mention the basic qualifications you have placed on the resume, but putting them into sentence format gives you the chance to add important “adjectives” that expand the meaning of your basic credentials. The free-form writing style permits you to be more creative in your presentation.

**Action Verbs.** Flowery phrases rarely add much and they should be avoided. Action-oriented verbs can bring your letter to life. They serve to connote a spirited, driving personality and a productive person. Figure 13.2 gives you a list of the most commonly used action verbs.

**Self-Descriptive Adjectives.** When used sparingly and in the right places, self-descriptive words add another dimension to your cover letter. Self-descriptive words add personal qualities to the letter. Their humanistic flavor may inspire the employer to treat you more as a person to be contacted than as a piece of paper to be processed. Figure 10.2 gives a list of self-descriptive words.

Saying a lot in a small space is critical. If the employer were to circle four key words in your cover letter after reading it, what would you want them to be? Have you accomplished this mission with the use of key words? Have you focused the employer’s eye on those points? How many of the self-descriptive words have you used in your resume and cover letter?





## Corporate Culture

### “Establish Ties to the Work Environment”

All employers are proud of their people, facilities, and basic organizational culture. One screening criteria is to ascertain if you fit their unique work environment. Your cover letter might allude to your awareness of their orientation and/or how you might relate.

Some of these cultural differences are listed below, and your goal should be to show your personal traits.

**Pressure and Pace:** Do you work well under stress, deadlines, and highly charged atmospheres?

**Change and Variety:** Do you enjoy frequent changes in duties and work colleagues?

**Competitive Climate:** Whether from internal or external forces, do you thrive in situations with competitive win-lose outcomes?

**Public Contact:** Do you thrive on situations where meeting new internal and external work colleagues is routine?

**Relationships:** Do you prefer the close-knit team work groups or settings that allow more individuality?

**Affiliation and Nurturing:** Do you prefer a parental close affiliation atmosphere where collegially is a standard?

**Security:** Do you feel comfortable in a stable and secure environment even though the financial rewards may be lower?

**Location and Community:** Is the community most conducive to the long-term lifestyle that you desire?

**Autonomy and Independence:** Are you comfortable in unstructured work and hour arrangements with high levels of ambiguity?

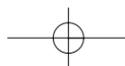
**Organizational Missions.** Most organizations develop a specific reputation over time that relates to the work group and cultural climate. This is influenced by the basic missions of the organization. Friends in the community and employees are your best sources of information.

When you apply to organizations, you may be able to influence your interview invitation by drawing references to how your background and that of the organization converge.

**Convergence.** You can acknowledge your awareness by referring to some of the criteria below as they relate to your background and interests.

- Size
- Growth
- Philosophy
- Work Ethic
- Community
- Products
- Advancement
- Pace

The type of employer, the industry, the history, past success, leadership, and many other variables create the corporate culture. Approach organizations where you can draw similarities between your goals, needs, and interests when you write them.





## Action Verbs

### What Have You Done?

How many of these verbs have you inserted into your resume and cover letter?

Accelerated	Controlled	Filled	Originated	Selected
Accomplished	Coordinated	Forecasted	Participated	Served
Accounted		Formulated		Serviced
Achieved	Corresponded	Found	Performed	Set up
Acquired	Counselled	Generated	Persuaded	Simplified
	Created		Pinpointed	
Acted	Critiqued	Guided	Planned	Sold
Adapted	Cut	Headed	Predicted	Solved
Administered		Hired		Spoke
Adopted	Dealt	Implemented	Prepared	Staffed
Advised	Debated	Improved	Presented	Started
	Delegated		Printed	
Advocated	Delivered	Improvised	Prioritized	Streamlined
Aided	Demonstrated	Increased	Processed	Strengthened
Allocated		Influenced		Stressed
Analyzed	Described	Initiated	Produced	Structured
Applied	Designed	Innovated	Programmed	Succeeded
	Determined		Projected	
Appraised	Developed	Inspired	Promoted	Summarized
Approved	Devised	Installed	Proofread	Supervised
Arbitrated		Instructed		Supported
Arranged	Diagnosed	Integrated	Proposed	Synthesized
Assembled	Directed	Interpreted	Proved	Systemized
	Discovered		Provided	
Assessed	Dispatched	Interviewed	Published	Tackled
Assigned	Displayed	Introduced	Purchased	Talked
Assisted		Invented		Taught
Attained	Distributed	Invested	Pushed	Tested
Audited	Documented	Investigated	Questioned	Touched
	Drafted		Raised	
Based	Drew	Involved	Read	Tracked
Budgeted	Earned	Judged	Recommended	Traded
Built		Launched		Trained
Checked	Edited	Lectured	Recorded	Transferred
Classified	Educated	Led	Recruited	Translated
	Effected		Reduced	
Coached	Eliminated	Lobbied	Referred	Treated
Collated	Encouraged	Located	Reinforced	Trimmed
Collected		Made		Troubleshoot
Communicated	Established	Maintained	Reorganized	Uncovered
Competed	Evaluated	Managed	Repaired	Updated
	Examined		Reported	
Compiled	Exhibited	Manipulated	Researched	Upgraded
Completed	Expanded	Measured	Resolved	Utilized
Composed		Mediated		Visualized
Conceived	Expedited	Motivated	Responded	Won
Conducted	Explained	Negotiated	Reviewed	Wrote
	Expressed		Revised	
Confronted	Facilitated	Observed	Scheduled	
Consolidated	Fashioned	Operated	Secured	
Constructed		Organized		

After your draft, go back to your resume and see how many of these actions verbs you can insert into your resume.

Figure 13.2





## Using Your Network

Many interviews are obtained by effectively using network contacts. Contacts are people who you know and who are willing to go to bat for you. They write letters, make telephone calls, and permit you to use their names. Contacts can be extremely influential in helping you obtain interviews. They open closed doors.

These network partners will not do your work for you. They typically set the scene and then you must take the initiative for the follow-up by letter, e-mail, or telephone call. Thousands of cover letters are written each year on the recommendations of contacts.

**Name Dropping.** Always mention the name of your contact if the contact was even in a minor way involved in suggesting a particular employer. Contacts usually personally know the person who they suggested you write. Mentioning the contact's name generates a whole new image.

*Using the name of a mutual acquaintance establishes a commitment for the employer to respond to you.*

Upon seeing the contact's name, an employer registers a familiar note. Contacts are important to both employers and employees. The employer quickly concludes that if you were endorsed by the contact, you must be good. Your resume will likely get read, and your chances for obtaining an interview are favorable.

**Network Partners.** There is an old adage that says that 80 percent of jobs are never published anywhere. Job leads come directly from people that you know. Your acquaintances know others who you do not know.

This is a growth concept. Your partner knows you and others get to know you through you. In reality, even a small number of contacts eventually lead you to a large bevy of network partners.

Your network partners, even those that you do not directly know, become your personal sales force. Your goal should be to consult with as many people as possible once your goals are set.

Your sales force opens doors for you. Your cover letter, and its derivatives, maintain that imperative relationship throughout your job search.

**Writing Consultants.** Not everyone has the same writing skills. You need, even if you are an excellent writer, your personal group of writing consultants. This is another way for you to get better known.

Not everyone has the ability to write well. The lack of outstanding writing skills is clearly a handicap. If you find yourself in this situation you should first make a series of rough drafts of your cover letter. Take your drafts with your resume to some experts and/or friends.

**Advice.** You do not have to be a professional writer to write cover letters, but seeking advice never hurts anyone. The best people to approach are people who you already know well.

The right people might be teachers, relatives, business associates, or neighbors. Most people are willing to give you some advice, and you will find most of the advice extremely helpful when you sit down to do the final copy.





### Synthesize Your Personal Qualities

How would you describe yourself using only five words? Cover letter readers must draw quick images of you after a 30 to 60 second rapid scan of your cover letter. What impression do you want your cover letter to leave?

After reading your cover letter, can you step away and write down five words that *accurately* describe your most important qualities? Every reader conjures up some picture about the person whose cover letter and resume (if it was read) was just reviewed. Most cover letter readers boil their evaluation down to about five key descriptive words. Some of the most frequently used positive words are listed below.

Analytical	Energetic	Persuasive
Assertive	Enterprising	Productive
Charger	Enthusiastic	Responsible
Confident	Expressive	Skilled
Creative	Extroverted	Tactful
Disciplined	Manager	Team player
Efficient	Personable	Technical

It is not practical to directly state: "I am . . ." You must imply those personable qualities by how you describe your academic experience, activities, events, achievements, recognitions, etc.

A clever way of accomplishing this attitude is to first pick the five most important qualities that you possess and wish to communicate. You use these actual words at least one time in the body of the cover letter.

A most effective approach is to describe an event, course, work experience, or personal activity using one or more of these adjectives. For example, you could state, "The team took a hard line approach that tactfully avoided conflict with . . ." or "The energetic group rallied 30 members in a productive enterprise that . . ."

The incorporation of action verbs and adaptive functional skills with descriptive adjectives presents an appealing candidate when these are sublimely transferred upon you. Challenge yourself in finding ways to choose insightful and accurate words that bring out your true personal qualities.

Action Verbs

Adaptive Skills

Descriptors

Review your initial drafts of your cover letters and resume. How many of these words have you been able to use?

College career counselors, employment agency consultants, and friends in human resource departments are the best qualified people from whom to seek advice. These professionals see all types of approaches. However, do not limit your search for advice to them. You also need to talk to people who know you best, including best friends and family.





### Typical Business Letter Format

Street Address  
City, State, Zip  
Telephone Number  
Current Date

**[4 spaces]**

Employer's Name  
Title  
Department  
Organization  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip

**[1 space]**

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr./Individual's Name:

**[1 space]**

**Introduction:** Reference previous conversation of correspondence . . . give specific dates if possible . . . state appreciation for past consideration . . . succinctly state current business . . . state your credentials . . . mention a specific job title . . . mention name of recommendors.

**[1 space]**

**Body:** Give details on purpose of letter . . . make reference to attachments . . . write short but complete sentences . . . avoid large and unnecessary words . . . cover the central theme completely . . . make paragraphs two to five sentences . . . list your accomplishments.

**[1 space]**

**Close:** State the action you expect from the recipient . . . keep paragraph short . . . indicate your next plan of action . . . offer specific date of expected action if appropriate . . . thank the recipient.

**[1 space]**

Very truly yours, (Sincerely, Sincerely yours, Truly yours, etc.)

**[3 spaces]**

Typed Name

**[1 space]**

P.S. Information that came after the letter was written.

Sometimes used for emphasis.

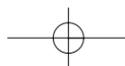
**[1 space]**

Encl. (Indicates that there is an attachment)

**[1 space]**

cc: Placement Office (Indicates others who are kept informed)

Figure 13.3





## Structure and Content

The cover letter follows the format of a basic business letter. Whenever possible, it should be addressed to a specific individual. In the rare instance where it is impossible to write to a specific person, the salutation should be "Dear Sir/Madam." The impersonal approach is used only as a last resort and its effectiveness is not likely to be strong.

If you do not know the proper person to write, call and request a specific name by giving the receptionist the title of the person you wish to address. Also surf the web for specific names. E-mails and letters written without a specific name attached to it rarely are responded to.

### Emphasize Your Functional Skills

How can you best contribute to the organization? What do you offer that is unique to you? Why are you among the best group of individuals who should be interviewed? Organizations are comprised of a variety of jobs that require specific skills.

Your cover letter should specifically address your strongest set of skills. You clearly cannot cover all of the skills that you possess so you must rank order them in relation to what you anticipate the employer's top screening criteria might be. The most common functional skills include the following:

Accounting	Fact-finding	Planning
Advising	Implementing	Problem-solving
Analyzing	Influencing	Promoting
Budgeting	Initiating	Relating
Delegating	Managing	Reporting
Designing	Motivating	Serving
Engineering	Operating	Speaking
Expediting	Organizing	Teaching
Expressing	Performing	Troubleshooting
Evaluating	Persuading	Writing

Your resume probably incorporates many of these words in the explanation of your academic background, part-time and full-time job descriptions, and other extracurricular, social, and civic activities. Nonetheless, you should draw attention to your skills in the body of your cover letter.

#### • • • Bullet Points • • •

The most effective method to accomplish this is to draw attention by using bullet points in the middle of your cover letter where you acknowledge your achievements. The achievement should use words that describe your strongest skills. Use as many of the functional skill words as you can to aid in capturing the reader's attention.

The cover letter is made up of four to six paragraphs, each of which has a specific purpose. The first paragraph is called the *introduction* and the last paragraph is called the *close*.

The middle paragraph(s) form the *body* of the letter and describe your qualifications and interests. Material in the body paragraph(s) is often intertwined with resume elements without appearing to mimic the resume.

## Introduction Paragraph

The introduction establishes the purpose of your letter, which is to apply for a specific job opening. The introduction normally comprises a maximum of four sentences.

**Goal.** One of the sentences describes the position for which you wish to be considered and, if appropriate, how you learned of the opening. Another sentence succinctly states your immediate job objective and longer-term career aspirations.

To interest the reader, many people also insert a brief sentence that gives their degree, major, graduation date, and years (if any) of relevant work experience. One of the sentences mentions the mutual acquaintances you have (if applicable) or the contact that suggested you write to the potential employer.

The opening paragraph must capture attention by establishing common goals and relationships.

**Attention.** The goal of the introductory paragraph is to attract attention. You do this by stating your purpose and lucidly explaining how your credentials can help the employer.

Strong opening sentences excite the employer and motivate him or her to continue reading your letter and the accompanying resume.

**Summary.** You have thus stated:

- Position seeking
- Qualifications
- Source of job lead
- Goals
- Mutual acquaintances
- Interest

This is your door opener. You may have other clever approaches that accomplish the same action, but this opener usually captures enough attention to get a thorough read.

## Body Paragraphs

The middle paragraphs sell your credentials to the employer. While urging him or her to read further, you are showing how your background perfectly matches an opening that you believe is available. Your mission in the body is to prove to the employer that you should at least be invited to interview for the assignment.



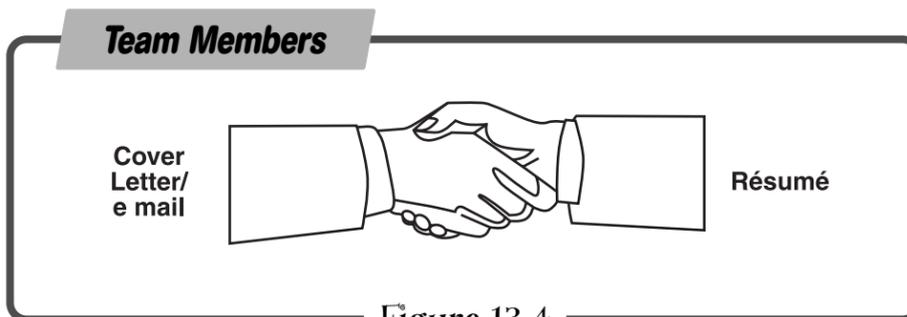


Figure 13.4

The goal of the body of your cover letter is to convince the employer that there is merit in thoroughly reading your attached resume.

**The Employment Proposition.** One of your sentences states your reasons for wanting to work for this organization. The employer is loyal to her or his organization and takes pride in it. You appeal to this pride in indicating the reasons why you feel it is a top-notch organization.

Another sentence specifies why you believe your background is relevant to the position being sought. Briefly describe your key assets without repeating too much of what is already on the attached resume. This personalizes your potential relationship with the organization in a manner that describes you in a more humanistic way than the facts on the resume.

One sentence in the body appeals to the employer's needs. In essence, you are making a proposition of employment, so you must show how you can help the employer achieve organizational goals in your area of specialization.

**Accomplishment Examples.** In a separate paragraph within the body, stress your accomplishments. This goes beyond stating your education and experience. You want to point to some specific examples in your education, extracurricular activities, and work experience that addressed a problem and solved it. It would be helpful to illustrate how these problems you solved earlier relate to possible assignments within the employer's organization.

AND IF YOU HIRE ME TODAY, YOU'LL RECEIVE THESE LOVELY STAINLESS STEEL STEAK KNIVES ABSOLUTELY FREE.



**Interest Examples.** Another paragraph is interest-oriented. It shows some of your more personal qualities that are more difficult to highlight on a resume. Including self-descriptive words helps. The most effective technique for accomplishing this is to discuss some episode in your background that brings out some of the personal qualities that you know the employer needs in the person filling the position you are seeking.

**Resume Reference.** One of the body paragraphs refers the reader to the resume. Indicate that the resume is only a brief summary of your background and that you would like to personally expand on your credentials. Imply that there is a lot of additional information about your background that is relevant to the position you are seeking.





## Close Paragraph

The last paragraph closes the sale. You have made your pitch, so now you must ask for the order.

Successful sales people who failed to get the order often have not convincingly asked for the sale. You have to assume that you have done a perfect job of selling; now show the employer how he or she can take advantage of the employment proposition that you have just presented. What is your value proposition?

**Ask for the interview!**

**Ask!** Ask for an interview. Do it straightforward. Ask for it in a positive, convincing manner as if you will not accept no for an answer.

### Achievement Highlighting Methods

**First Paragraph:** Capture attention

**Body Paragraphs:**

- Highlight Your Achievements
- Give Specific, Qualifiable Results
- Draw From Examples Like These

#### School

- Worked with a seven member team of students
- Earned highest grade on senior class project
- Led a group of 150 students who raised \$50,000 for . . .
- Maintained a 3.5 GPA the last two years
- Earned a 3.6 GPA in my major
- Made six presentations in my senior project class
- Received a recognition trophy on . . .

#### Work

- Hired 28 people in three months
- Sold 10,000 gizmos in five months
- Delivered 220 prospects on a minimal budget
- Wrote three articles for two different journals
- Supervised a team of 20 staff with a \$500,000 budget
- Increased earnings by 40 percent in six months
- Saved firm \$50,000 via cost reduction efforts
- Increased productivity 15 percent

**Closing Paragraph:** Ask for the interview

Figure 13.5



### Sample Cover Letter

Your Address  
City, State, Zip  
Telephone Number  
Date of Letter

**[4 spaces]**

Contact Name  
Contact's Title  
Contact's Department  
Employer Organization  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip

**[1 space]**

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Contact's Last Name:

**[1 space]**

#### Opening Paragraph:

- State purpose
- Capture attention
- Name position seeking
- Use recommender's name
- Use name of mutual friends
- Consider opening with a question
- Mention source of lead
- State top credentials
- Be assertive

#### [Capture Attention — Build Match]

#### Body Paragraphs:

- Create interest
- Show enthusiasm
- Stress skills
- Use self-descriptive words
- Use action verbs
- Emphasize excellence
- Show commitments honored
- Present confident tone
- Humanize
- Tell a brief story
- Give rationale for decisions
- Illustrate personality
- Point to achievement
- Don't repeat resume
- Use adverbs for time constraints
- Put adjectives with activities
- State performance levels
- Identify how skills obtained
- Build credibility
- Create warmth
- End at three paragraphs—maximum!
- Give reasons for interest

**[Read More of Novel . . . Refer to Attached Resume]**

**[Explain Why You Are Best Qualified]**

**[Create Excitement And Interest In Wanting To Know More  
About Your Education, Experience, And Activities]**

#### Closing Paragraph

- Close strongly
- Stay confident
- Avoid wimpy close
- Make response easy
- Restate solid match
- Refer to resume
- Call for appointment soon
- Initiate follow-up plans
- State your next step
- Give specific dates
- Avoid "If you have . . ."
- Take charge

**[Ask For The Interview!]**

**[1 space]**

Sincerely,

**[3 spaces — Sign Letter]**

Type Your Full Name

**[1 space]**

Enclosure: Resume [Always Attach]

cc: Copy mutual acquaintances

Figure 13.6



### Cover Letter Format Tips

Your Address (home or campus)  
City, State, Zip  
Telephone Number  
Date of Letter

**[4 spaces]**

Contact's Name  
Contact's Title  
Contact's Department  
Employing Organization  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip

**[1 space]**

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Contact's Last Name:

**[1 space]**

#### Opening Paragraph:

- Type individually; never use a form letter
- Address to a specific person
- Use 8-1/2 × 11 paper only
- Use standard white bond paper
- Use perfect grammar and spelling
- Stick to one-page limit
- Provide ample margins and white space
- Center on page for appearance

#### Body Paragraph(s):

- Use bullet points for emphasis
- Graphically lay out paragraphs
- Center key accomplishments
- Display job related courses as a group
- Limit total letter to a five-paragraph maximum
- Limit paragraphs to a five-sentence maximum
- Emphasize accomplishments and recognition
- Highlight skills that match job

#### Closing Paragraph:

- Ask for the interview!
- Be bold, convincing and assertive
- Express positive match
- Refer to resume attached
- Make employer's reply easy
- Advise that you will call on a specific date
- Ask a friend to proofread your letter

**[1 space]**

Sincerely,

**[3 spaces — Sign Full Name]**

Type Full Name

**[1 space]**

P.S. • Sometimes used for emphasis  
• Limit to one brief sentence

**[1 space]**

Encl(s). • Resume enclosed (always)  
• Other supporting documentation enclosed (occasionally) (like unofficial transcripts)  
• Portfolio (if appropriate for profession) (evidence of abilities)  
• References (To Whom It May Concern letter) (rarely used here)  
• Unofficial transcript (rarely used at this point)

cc: Copy mutual acquaintances

Figure 13.7



The close should never exceed four sentences: Effective closes are often much shorter. The close is aggressive.

You want to sound like you are in command but that you recognize the employer must make a decision to invite you for an interview. You want to let the employer know that although the ball is in his court, you are still prepared to serve again.

A close that says, "If you feel a match is present, please contact me," is not strong enough. You can avoid a "no interest" form letter by asking the employer for more information, or by stating that you will call for an appointment, or that you will stop by in a few days.

*Be assertive by suggesting a date that you will call to set up an interview appointment time.*

**Match.** Leave the impression that there is a mutual concern. It is only a matter of the two of you agreeing on a time and place for the interview.

Let the employer know that you do not expect the organization to pay your expenses for an interview trip for a preliminary interview. Very few employers will invite you to travel a long distance for an interview and pay your expenses prior to a preliminary interview. An exception might be made after you are interviewed by telephone or after they have contacted some mutually known references.

**Next Step.** Close the letter by informing the employer of your next action. You might go as far as suggesting a date and time for an interview and calling to confirm it. Your taking the initiative relieves the employer of immediate action. This approach could stall a "no interest" letter.

This initiative gives you a second chance at the organization. The second initiative can also force the employer to hold your file for a day or two, which might generate a more thorough reading during a later and slower part of the day.

You will find some excellent examples of good cover letters in the websites of big job boards and advice websites like [vault.com](http://vault.com), [wetfeet.com](http://wetfeet.com), and [careerlab.com](http://careerlab.com).

### Cover Letter Envelope

I. M. Foryou No. 1 Allgood Road New Approach, NY 00000	Stamp
Specific Name Actual Title Department Organization Address City, State Zip Code	

Figure 13.8





## Follow-up Approaches

### Follow-up Options

A little empathy can tell you what an employer's potential options are after reading your resume and cover letter:

- No reply
- No interest
- No opening
- Hold in file
- Call for appointment
- Stop by
- Invite call

The potential for negative replies greatly outweighs that for positive options.

**Potential Responses.** Your goal is to get a personal call or written reply. You do not want a form reply. You can influence the employer's action with several techniques.

To insure obtaining a reply in as short a time as possible, make the employer's task easy. An e-mail or postcard could lay out boxes for the employer to check for the options listed above. If you do not already have it, you can indicate a space for the employer's personal telephone number, as well.

Be careful about suggesting an e-mail reply. It makes it almost too easy for the employer to give you a "no interest" reply. By telephone, you at least get to ask "why."

**Dates.** Another approach is to suggest some dates and times for an interview in the letter. Follow up with a telephone call in which you simply ask which of these times would be acceptable.

**Request.** Many employers require a completed application blank before an initial interview. One technique occasionally used to avoid an immediate turndown is to request an application blank or further information.

After getting a reply and completing the application blank, you can call and ask when it would be convenient for you to return the application blank and discuss your credentials in more detail in person. This technique can also give you the name and title of a specific person to contact.

**Call.** The most common approach is to advise the employer that you will telephone on a specific date to negotiate a convenient interview time. On the appointed day, you call and make appropriate arrangements.

Some experts recommend that you establish the appointment with an assistant to avoid the possibility of a turndown after a brief telephone interview. The assumption is that telephone interviews are rarely as successful as

*Call for an appointment on the date indicated.*





personal face-to-face interviews. But if you are ready for a telephone screen, you can use it to your benefit.

The specific follow-up approach you employ should fit your personality and judgment. The main idea is for you to take some initiative and not allow the decision to be based solely on your cover letter and resume. A telephone interview is better than no interview.

### Telephone Finesse

Once you call an employer, getting through to the right person can be a significant challenge. Most of the key decision members often have an assistant who screens calls. You need to develop a technique that will get you past this screen.

In most cases you must first explain the purpose of your call. The assistant will decide on behalf of the boss's time whether your call should be put ahead of current activities being conducted.

Be careful in explaining your *whole* story or the person you are talking to may make a decision you do not want. You must give requested information but do not volunteer a thorough background description unless this is the decision-maker. Lower-level employees often have a penchant for making decisions in order to protect a supervisor's schedule.

You should also expect voice mail. Plan your response ahead of time. Be specific about when it is best to reach you. Leave a tone of urgency, but do not give too much more screening data. Be positive and enthusiastic. Practice the message.

#### Telephone Barrier Busters

- Be prepared with extensive notes
- Get a hook in with your opening statement
- Avoid the secretary screen
- Entice but do not interview via telephone
- Press for an appointment
- Use hard hitting, short verbal commercials
- Write notes as you listen
- After appointment, get off the line quickly
- Be available late afternoons and early morning
- Use names of mutual acquaintances
- Smile when you talk—be upbeat

Figure 13.9





The telephone is one of your most potent job finding tools. Your goal is to get an appointment, not to be interviewed. Keep the conversation moving toward your goal of getting the appointment with the right person.

If you are not certain of who the proper person is, call the switchboard number and ask who runs the function that interests you. Be sure to get the name spelled correctly, a full title, an e-mail, and the telephone number.

The telephone is so important primarily because of speed. You get results, one way or another, almost instantly. Unfortunately, telephone tag is also your greatest enemy. Give a person a reasonable time in which to call you back, but do not hesitate to call again if you have not received a reply within 24 hours. The employer may not be in the same rush as you.

One way to avoid telephone tag or message ignoring is to not leave a call back message. Try to find out when the employer is available and advise that you "will call back since you are so difficult to reach." Call back promptly. Be courteous and sensitive by asking if this is a good time to talk.

Be prepared for brush-off lines like the following:

- "Send me an e-mail."
- "Send me a resume."
- "I am busy right now."
- "Talk to Personnel first."
- "No needs right now."
- "Great credentials but . . ."
- "Call me in a few weeks."
- "Committed to another."

You must be prepared to address the brush-off lines with previously prepared routines. You can always acknowledge that you understand their situation by showing sympathy and understanding while acknowledging agreement. You must presume that your talents are needed in the organization, so you should offer some solution to the objections by pointing out some alternatives.

One method to deal with the brush-off is to keep on the telephone by asking questions. Deal with objections for being turned down in a logical step-by-step analysis. You should always close with a request for a personal appointment.

One effective preparation technique for telephoning is to develop a one to two minute commercial about yourself. Nearly everyone will ask you to tell about yourself, and the better prepared you are, the more organized you appear. Try to rehearse your commercial by listening to yourself on an audio tape recorder. Do not read it.

In closing, you should ask for the appointment by volunteering some specific times, even if it is after normal working hours. Repeat the date, time, and place as you write it down for your records.

#### **Direct Marketing Concepts**

- Market research
- Advertising design
- Target customers
- Ad layout
- Mail distribution
- Telemarketing follow-up
- Sales presentation
- Close the sale

Figure 13.10





## The Direct Contact Job Search Strategy

Many experts object to the idea of waiting until you have a firm job lead before you start your job search campaign. These experts suggest a dynamic, aggressive, direct contact approach to the job search. Waiting for job leads to materialize is much too passive.

This traditional method of job search aggressively goes after the hidden job market as well as the advertised jobs. The direct contact job campaign is an approach with overtones of a mass media blitz.

This approach may also be used in smaller, targeted mailings. The odds of success are improved significantly by the more targeted approaches where the likelihood of a job match is much higher.

The www will help you identify both a narrow band or broad base list of contacts to distribute the cover letter and resume. The initial decision is how to best segment the "world of contacts" with a realistic search strategy. The job boards and classified ads are the best job leads. Blanketing cover letters and resumes too broadly is seldom successful.

### Basic Concept

The direct contact job search is the number one method used by most people. The idea is to advertise the product, and if it has value, the public will buy it. This direct approach is a time-tested and effective marketing technique.

Some products sell better than others. Sometimes the difference in marketability is due to the quality of the products. Sometimes it is due to the quality of the advertising. There are as many marketing strategies as there are products.

A look through any basic marketing textbook reveals a massive array of marketing concepts that help to sell products. Some of these concepts might have application for persons interested in selling themselves to potential employers.





These concepts include:

- market research
- market segmentation
- product presentation
- brand management
- advertising strategy
- advertising design
- media utilization
- channels of distribution
- selling techniques

Are these ideas applicable to you? Can your credentials be marketed? What is your market segmentation? This whole subject is repulsive to many people. Yet there is a significant amount of validity in applying marketing concepts to the job search process.

The experts can prove that these sophisticated approaches greatly aid people in finding nearly perfect career matches.

The direct contact job search strategy is controversial. Many experts label it as archaic, backward, ineffective, and disgusting. You must decide if your values and the techniques are compatible. However, you cannot decide whether the approach is for you unless you understand it.

**Definition.** A direct contact campaign involves the preparation and dissemination of a qualifications package to potential employers. The qualifications package (the presentation of the product) usually consists of a uniquely designed cover letter and resume.

The dissemination of the package is usually done by e-mail, snail mail, or personal delivery, but occasionally other media are used such as “position wanted” ads in appropriate publications. The decision on which dissemination method to use involves an analysis of the market to be targeted. Market segmentation is very important to your success.

The letter is often referred to as a personal sales letter, a broadcast letter, or simply a cover letter. Actually, the format of sales letters is no different from that of regular cover letters.

The “sales” letter hits a broader market. You do not always know the types of persons who will receive the letter, so you must write the letter in a way that will capture the attention of people serving a variety of functions in your career field. The same thinking applies to the resume. It is very general depending on the audience.

Usually, the direct campaign strategy is more of a mass market appeal. It cannot be as finely tuned as the individualized cover letter and resume prepared for a specific job lead. But best success comes from focusing on a targeted market.

The direct e-mail campaign has much potential for abuse. You identify your “contacts” in the usual networking way plus use the www as your secondary identification resource. You use your carefully crafted cover letter and attached resume. Once you learn the web research and e-mail techniques, it is very simple, inexpensive, and effective to broadcast your sales package.

Employers, especially the larger ones, will not be happy with the use of e-mail. It is just too easy to identify an employer. They are swamped with

*Like the cover letter, a sales letter is likely to be far more effective if it is addressed to a specific person.*





e-mails from unsolicited sources. If you use the direct e-mail approach, make certain that you have carefully targeted an audience that has reason to be interested in your credentials. Using employment websites, do your research. Learn the best means to get your information into the employer's applicant tracking system.

**Objective.** The objective of a direct campaign is to generate job leads that relate to you. It does not create jobs but tries to find the ones available. The odds of making a direct hit with each ad package is extremely low.

The whole concept plays the percentages just as any other direct advertiser does. Direct advertising has traditionally been a better medium to use than television, radio, newspaper, etc. for obvious reasons. Your advertising can be targeted to a finite base of employers of a reasonable size that is potentially productive.

Once a job lead is noted, the goal is to obtain the interview. The procedure is then the same as with any other lead. There must be a telephone call or e-mail follow-up for each lead generated. The telephone call often serves as a preliminary interview, but your goal should focus on an appointment.

Many people expect to hear that the employer is interested and wants to interview them immediately. Although that does occur occasionally, a more realistic expectation is simply to expect that the employer desires more information. Hopefully, you will be able to determine if there is a *possibility* for an opening with the employer.

When you receive direct mail at your home, you normally do not respond. Unless you are interested in the product, you do not return the easy reply envelope.

Employers are not likely to respond to your unsolicited cover letter and resume unless there is a possible match. Direct mail advertisers often do a follow-up by mail. Your follow-up will need to be done via telephone.

## Response Possibility

The ideal response from an employer implies that the organization currently has a job opening that matches your job objective and fits your background perfectly. Ideally, the employer calls you on the telephone for the purpose of discussing your background and interests in more depth to ascertain your current status, personality fit, communication abilities, and skill level.

Assuming that there seems to be a match, the employer establishes a mutually agreeable time for the two of you to get together for an interview. If there are any expenses to be incurred, the details of who pays them are discussed. Rarely will an employer offer to pay your travel expenses unless you have been prequalified by a third party who is highly credible.

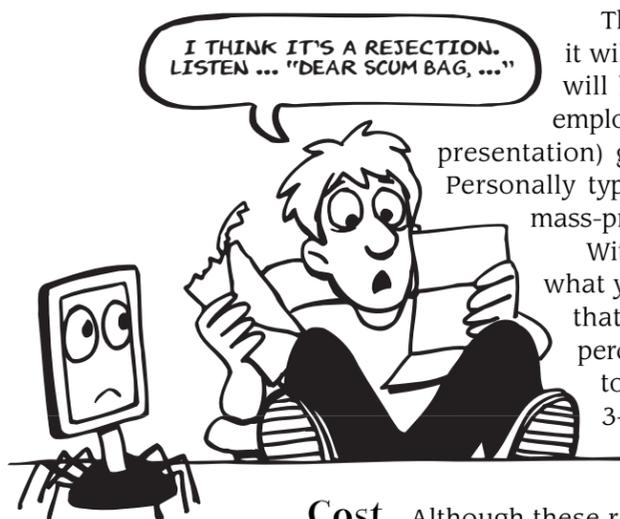
The perfect scenario happens infrequently. You learn to "roll" with the response. You take a more aggressive action toward any employer who gives you even the slightest hint of a possible match.

**Rate of Return.** One major criticism to the direct contact approach is the low rate of return. Most employers do not respond at all. Do you go down to the store and indicate that you do not want to buy an advertised product? Expecting employers to respond to the hundreds of unsolicited letters and e-mails they receive is unrealistic. Just hope that you can get your material read.

Usually, you can expect **no** response unless there is a job possibility.

The rate of return is always low.





The response rate varies greatly. In soft job markets, it will be lower. For highly sought-after candidates, it will be higher. For carefully targeted populations of employers, it may be higher. Well-designed materials (the presentation) get read more frequently and more completely. Personally typed and signed letters get more attention than mass-produced letters and e-mails.

With all of these variables, it is impossible to predict what your response rate will be. Mass surveys suggest that 3 percent is above average. Some people get 10 percent, which is phenomenally high. Others are lucky to get a 1-percent reply. Your best estimation is the 3-percent expectation that a job interview possibility will result after your carefully constructed plan.

**Cost.** Although these rates of return sound low, you must ask yourself, “compared to what?” Before you compare approaches you need a common base to which to relate the results. Your results can be defined as interviews. Your common base can be dollars per interview.

The cost of a direct contact campaign is not minor. A typical distribution might include 1,000 contacts. What is an average cost? It is hard to estimate. It is better to spend your time on this approach, however, than on just sitting and hoping.

If you get a 3-percent positive acknowledgment and half turn into interviews, you will have a bargain. The amount of time you have spent per interview may make this a relatively inexpensive method for you to use to generate job leads and interviews.

What you include in the cost is important. How many contacts will you send to? Will you do all of the work yourself or hire it to be done? Will you use professionals to design the cover letter and resume? How many long distance telephone calls will you have to make? These questions impact on your particular cost situation.

**Type of Responses.** The type of responses that you get depends upon how you close your letter. Leaving open-ended replies (like, “If you have an interest, please. . .”) decreases your chances of replies. The best to hope for is an e-mail or telephone call wanting additional info.

Very few, if any, replies are going to say, “We like your background and want you here for an interview.” A more likely positive reply is a telephone call to get more information about you and discuss your interests. After this brief telephone interview, there may be some discussion of your coming in for an interview.

If you use the direct approach, you must have a telephone answering machine. Do not use cute “we are out” messages. Be brief. You do not want to miss a telephone reply or turn off a potential employer.

For senior management-level openings, employers may pay travel costs to the first interview, but usually the candidate must pay the first interview expenses. If negotiations continue through to the offer stage, most employers will later pick up expenses. Expenses are a negotiable item.

*Although the rate of return is low and the cost per interview may also be low, your personal time commitment may also be high.*



Most of your positive replies will state, "If you are in the area, please call." That is your clue that there is probably a job opening now or one is anticipated for someone with your credentials. You should follow up with a telephone call immediately or an aggressive e-mail.

Most replies simply state that there are "no openings consistent with your background at the present time." Some may indicate that your resume will be kept on file. Keeping your resume on file usually guarantees nothing until you write again in eight to ten weeks to reactivate the employer's memory.

## Techniques

All who have used the direct contact approach have learned from their successes and failures. Upon analyzing the results, everyone comes up with a few ideas that would have greatly increased the quantity and quality of their results. Most of these ideas are specific to the individual or career field.

Many ideas can be gained from others who have used this approach. The gimmicks that have been tried number into the thousands and everyone seems to think his or her approach will work for everyone else.

The simple fact is that there are no universally successful techniques. If there were, employers would be inviting everyone who writes for an interview.

The odds are extremely high that an employer is not going to have an opening at the specific point in time when you apply. Direct contacts plays the percentages.

The most successful techniques employed by others relate to three things:

1. Improving the qualifications package (your resume and cover letter)
2. Improving the target population (your customer base)
3. Improving the quality of the sales presentation at the preliminary telephone or in-person interview.

Most positive responses are likely to be a "send application," "call," or "stop by" reply.

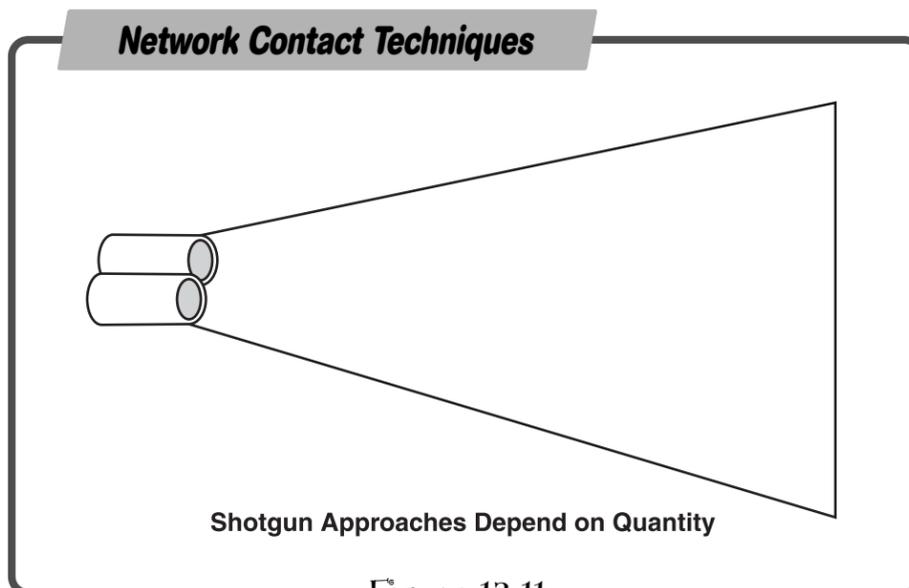


Figure 13.11





The techniques below describe your options.

**Shotgun Approach.** In any approach, you have to zero-in on some population's target. The targeted employers must be in the geographical area of your concern and normally offer some opportunities in your field of expertise as stated on the resume you plan to send. This is often called market segmentation. Who is most likely to hire you?

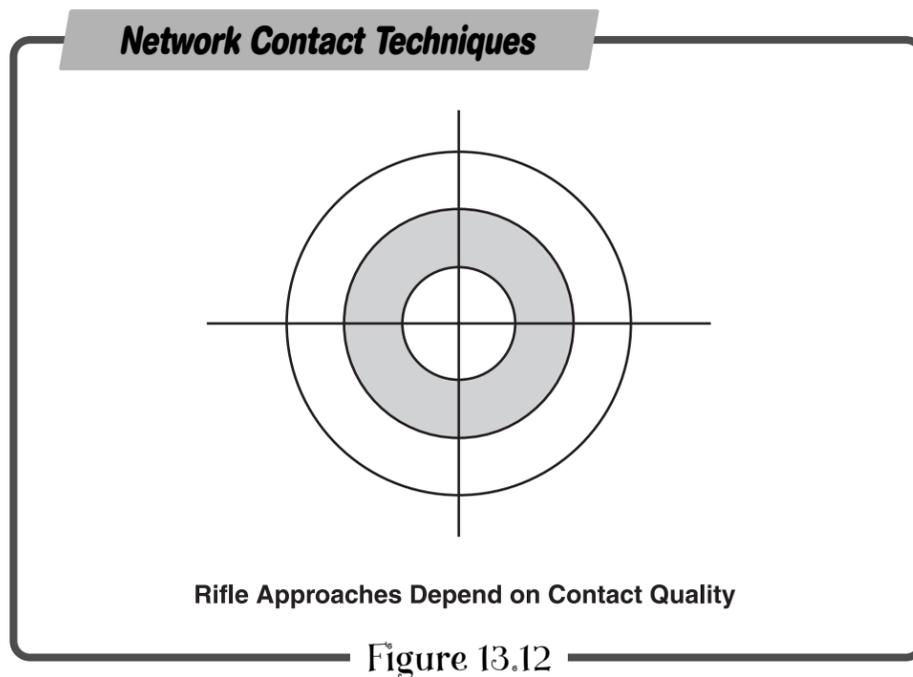
A shotgun approach takes a wide and large population and broadcasts your credentials to a diverse group of people. Your resume may be sent to hundreds of employment managers or sent to everyone employed in your profession.

This is akin to using a sawed-off shotgun to hunt game if you are not a particularly accurate shooter. A shotgun spreads the pellets into a large circle of fire. Although some pellets may hit the target, they won't necessarily kill it, but you will still have a chance to stalk down the target.

If you employ this strategy, you are simply hoping for a very small percentage return from a large sample. Although the response *rate* may be lower, the *number* of subsequent replies could be larger.

You may have to employ this approach if you have limited time to sort out the most likely employers or if you cannot find narrow mailing lists. This is not usually very effective.

**Rifle Approach.** The rifle approach takes aim on a population group that you feel has a high probability of employing people with your credentials. It is in the middle ground between the personal cover letter and the shotgun approach.



The rifle approach is just a small step above the individually typed cover letter.





To a major degree, your occupational field dictates the approach you use. For example, if you were seeking a history teaching position in higher education, there would be about 3,000 colleges that might hire you. You could write the chairman of every history department. That would be a shotgun approach.

However, given the declining enrollment in colleges, the financial plight of small private liberal arts schools, and the strong economy in the Midwest, you might elect to contact the chairperson only at public institutions located in 12 midwestern states. That would be taking a rifle approach based on a realistic appraisal of job probabilities.

The goal behind the rifle approach is to raise your percent rate of return from 1 percent to the 5 percent range. It is not always practical to use if your target population is not readily identifiable.

**Appearance.** Individually signed letters often encourage the receiver to respond. Many employers make it a policy to respond to all personalized correspondence, especially if it is addressed to them specifically. With today's word processing equipment, personal letters are not the laborious chore they once were.

Mailing services provide letters for signature. For as many letters as you might need to send, the cost is significant. Other than pay the bill, all you need to do is provide the date, inside address, and salutation. The service does the rest.

The least expensive and far less desirable approach is to use a printed broadcast letter. The salutation would simply be "Dear Sir/Madam," "Dear Employer," or be omitted altogether. This is *not* recommended! Or worse yet, blanket e-mail your contacts.

The ideal approach is to have all of your letters personally signed. Whether the cost is worth the increased response depends upon your financial resources and personal judgment.

Most experts suggest that if you cannot write "personalized" letters, the direct mail approach is not worth the effort. A word processor can alleviate much of the drudgery but not everything. Much depends on your market segmentation.

## Mechanics

The real success in direct campaigns often lies in simple mechanics. A job worth doing is worth putting time into. If you decide to employ this approach, prepare yourself to do some plain old hard manual work.

It takes some ingenuity and research to obtain the most effective mailing labels, but the real work is involved with the mundane clerical duties. And the quality of the performance of the mundane duties is a major factor in the rate of success.

**Mailing Lists.** The mailing list you use depends upon your background and career interest. You will find membership directories in your career field on the www. You can obtain many names from directories in your public library if you are not web efficient.





### Computers In The Job Search

There are literally thousands of software programs written for personal computers. If you have computer skills and access to a PC, you will find this an enormous time saver. For more generic tasks, there are three types of programs that can be especially useful in the job search process.

1. **Word processing** — Use for letters and possibly the resume. (WORD)
2. **Database managers** — Use for tracking your contacts. (ACCESS)
3. **Spreadsheets** — Use in making lists and tracking efforts. (EXCEL)

There are a number of other specific software packages that are dedicated to the search process. These software packages contain form letters, tests for personal analysis, checklists for self-assessment, target contact lists, special form letters that are easily modified, resume writing assistance, and interview results evaluations.

Computers help you take a more rifle oriented approach to the direct job search strategy. You can customize your promotional materials to a specific targeted market.

The market is proliferated with a variety of software aids. These are available in many bookstores, college career service offices, employment agencies, and in retail software supply stores. The www has an impressive array of related tools.

Since this is a play-the-numbers game, you must make the size of the list worthwhile. Mailing out 100 letters to get three replies is marginally fruitful. Most experts recommend a start of at least 250 names, which might generate about ten interviews.

**Distribution Duties.** The boring part of the direct campaign is the clerical operation of putting the materials together. Printing letters, addressing and stuffing envelopes, printing labels for envelopes (or pasting on preprinted ones), affixing postage, and mailing take a huge amount of “nitty gritty” time. E-mailing might save time but a handy employer delete key often makes your efforts worthless.

The outcome can be worth the effort. You have the option of hiring a part-time person or paying a mailing service to do this if you have the financial resources.

Use a good word processing program for your letters. Use the mail merge feature. Use a letter quality printer. Always personally sign each letter. It cannot look like a copied letter or blanket e-mail.

**Summary.** When your accomplishments and qualifications are written and packaged in a professional manner, direct job campaigns can be extremely useful. They take much work, but positive results are possible.

The great appeal of the direct approach is its potential ability to generate a number of interviews with a minimum amount of work. Unlike responding





to an advertisement, when you do make a hit, you may have little competition for the job because you have tapped part of the hidden job market.

The other major appeal is that you do all of the work. Relying on others can be disastrous. With the direct approach, you are on your own more than with any other type of job search technique.

Remember that this is a “play the odds” strategy. By definition, your percentage return is low. Quality cover letters and accurate, specifically targeted lists greatly improve your success rate.

## Career Action Projects

The best way to learn how to prepare a cover letter and a direct contact job search strategy is to just do it. Listed below are two similar career action projects, which, after completed, will provide you with a sound understanding of the activities involved.

You should approach these as if they were your real campaign. Once you design the approach, modifying it for later update and use is very convenient.

Access to a computer word processor is an essential requirement. You undoubtedly will be changing addresses and your cover letter frequently to be most effective.

### Contact Data Base

Using directories, classified ads, trade publications, association membership lists, the www, and other sources of job leads, make a 100-name list of potential contacts and job lead prospects that are consistent with your career objectives. The address list should include organization name, division (if appropriate), contact’s name, title, telephone number, city, state, and zip code.

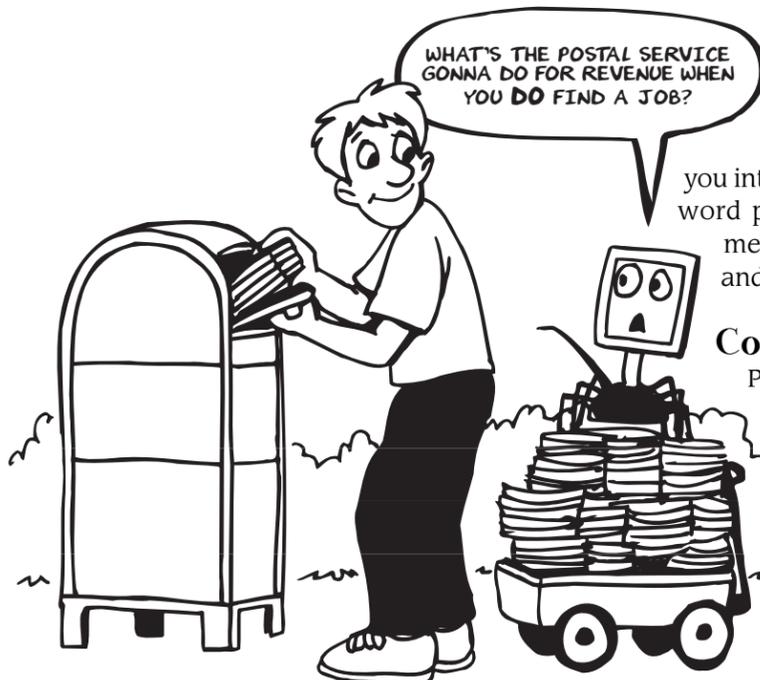
Enter data into a word processor or spreadsheet so it could easily be updated. You might also want to set up a field for the date you mailed your letter for recordkeeping and follow-up purposes.

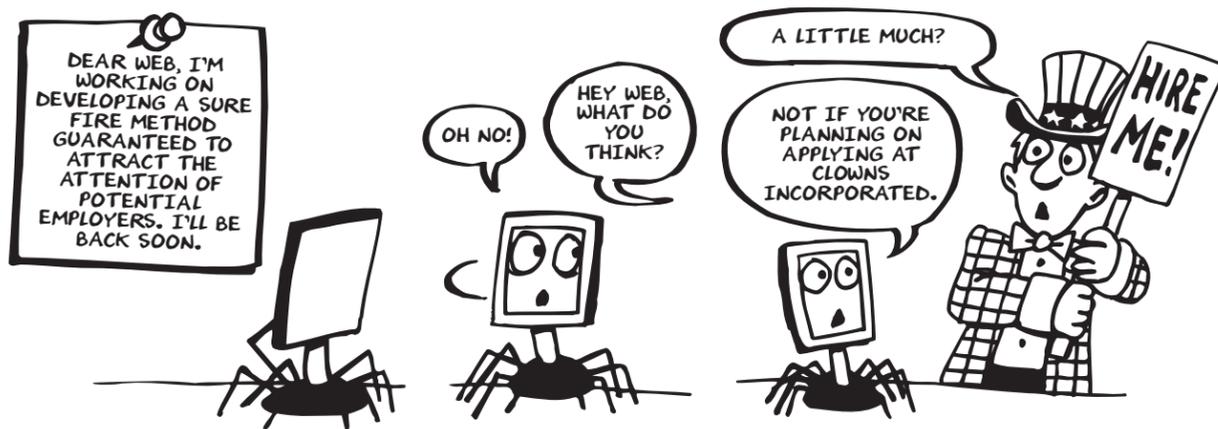
Develop a one-page cover letter that you intend to actually use. Insert this into your word processor, so that you can do a mail merge routine to develop your addressed and typed letter.

#### Contact Career Action Project.

Print out a complete listing of your database. Print the date you intend to mail the letter and the follow-up date for your telephoning. Prepare a cover letter and a page explaining the sources used to develop the contact list.

Discuss why you feel this mailing list is best for your situation.





What factors did you use to segment your market? Describe which technique for preparing your cover letter you plan to use and discuss why you adopted that approach. Give an estimate of the expected percentage of response you expect and how you arrived at this figure.

Prepare the advertising package that you plan to use to send to potential employers. Write your sales letter and resume in a broad enough style to apply to a variety of types of jobs but narrow enough to give employers an idea of your specific career interests.

## Cover Letters

The cover letter is one of your most important tools in your job campaign. It is wise to experiment with several different designs initially. You may wish to customize a given design with a specifically prepared mailing list.

It would be wise to solicit the advice of your friends and career advisors on which design might be most appropriate for your unique databases. Review the various formats suggested and review all of the samples before you start this project.

Make a list of your best action verbs, accomplishment statements, and personal qualities. Preparing the items to include before writing your rough draft aids you in making the letter flow smoothly and still cover all of the essential qualities.

Write your three to five achievement bulletpoints before you draft your first and last paragraphs. Step away and see what must go into three to five body paragraphs and/or your highlighted bulletpoints.

**Cover Letter Action Project.** Prepare three different, perfectly typed, one-page cover letters that you intend to consider using. Graphically format each letter differently by using bullet points with one and paragraphs with others. Highlight courses and functional skills differently. You might change some content depending on your market segment.

Force yourself to use different formats and style. Remember that each one is a sales tool. Avoid just repeating the resume by expanding or summarizing only the most relevant and important skills and achievements. The content could be identical but just formatted differently.





Address each letter to a different person but one that is realistic for your potential situation. On a separate page, present an analysis of the three different letters. Are your qualities all noted? Did you include your key functional skills and highlight your accomplishments? Why would you select one of the designs over another design? Does one simply repeat the resume more than others? Use the sample cover letters as a guide in creating yours.

Try to be very critical of each letter. Get a friend to help you with the critique. How do you intend to use these letters? What is your plan for dissemination (timing, targets, etc.)? Use a separate page for your distribution plan.

Writing this analysis should prove to be your most effective method of learning how to write cover letters.

This project should end up with three differently styled cover letters with a single page attached to each letter that explains its purpose, attachments, mailing lists, etc. Describe how and when you plan to use each letter.

To assist with this cover letter/e-mail project, several examples of cover letters follow. If this does not provide the number of ideas and formats you need, you can browse to the websites below for more samples.

[www.jobweb.org](http://www.jobweb.org)  
[www.vault.com](http://www.vault.com)  
[www.wetfeet.com](http://www.wetfeet.com)  
[www.careermag.com](http://www.careermag.com)

Nearly all of the websites with job listings offer articles and sample illustrations on construction of your cover letter.

These websites make the creation of your contact database fairly easy since you often get contact names with e-mail addresses. Just remember that a contact provided by a network partner is far more likely to generate an interview appointment. The personal nature and credibility greatly enhances your interview success rate.

Build our own list of network partners over the years and nurture it with regular contact. People respond best to people they know. Large website databases are not your best network.





**Limited Experience in Finance**

125 S. Park Avenue  
Salem, NC 00125  
333-333-3333  
June 20, xxxx

Mr. Scot Purdue  
Vice President, Finance  
ABC, Inc.  
125 SW Research Park  
Raleigh, NC 00245

Dear Mr. Purdue:

I am seeking employment as a senior financial analyst, preferably in the electronics industry where I have two years of experience. ABC Inc. has been repeatedly recommended to me by Professor James Wine of Duke University who is a leader in the industry and in my area of expertise. Your respected development program and expanding growth potential prompts my inquiry.

My forté at XYZ has been responding to difficult problems and creating solutions to the problems. I have met several challenges by reducing cost overruns and increasing profit margins on marginal products. I believe that my efforts have helped us turn the corner.

A strong academic performance in my academic program and extensive leadership activities positively address my motivation and work ethics. My corporate internship further supports my interest in the industry. The course content below illustrates my skill base.

- Accounting — 9 hours
- Finance — 12 hours
- Computer Analysis — 6 hours
- Communications — 12 hours

The insightful two years at XYZ provide me a learning base, but I also want the longer-term potential offered by a firm in a more growth oriented environment. Your firm would complement my academic and work background very well, which would enable me to make a significant contribution in your financial area. The route to a controllership assignment in an operating facility is much more feasible than at XYZ.

I request an opportunity to show you how my credentials and your needs fit together. Would it be possible for us to get together someday next week? I will call you on Friday to see when a suitable time might be scheduled.

Sincerely,

Robert S. Wallstreet

Enclosure: Resume

**KEY POINTS**

- ▶ Position
- ▶ Experience
- ▶ Reducing costs
- ▶ Increasing margin
- ▶ Leadership
- ▶ Technical skills
- ▶ Larger goals
- ▶ Get together





### Minimal Financial Sales Experience

#### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Graduating
- ▶ Commercial sales
- ▶ Financial orientation
- ▶ Industry knowledge
- ▶ Leadership
- ▶ Transcript skills
- ▶ Relevant hobby
- ▶ Local contact

125 S. High Street  
Columbus, OH 43210  
333-337-3337  
May 1, xxxx

Mr. James R. Big  
Director of College Relations  
Hewlett Packard  
Palo Alto, CA 94444

Dear Mr. Big:

In May I will be graduating from Ohio State with a degree in marketing supported by a strong set of courses in finance and computer applications. I am seeking a position in commercial sales that draws equally from my marketing and finance strengths. Your opportunity in calling on corporate financial managers for the purpose of selling financial software and hardware solutions excites me.

Hewlett Packard and other hardware vendors in the computer industry offer a unique opportunity to use many of my skills. My elected leadership activities and involvement in intramural team sports give you some clues to my personality and spirit. My unofficial transcript illustrates the depth and breadth of my skills and interests in your opportunity.

I read several popular computer magazines regularly and have stayed attuned to recent developments in microcomputers and related equipment throughout college. I work part-time at a local computer retailer dealing with everyone from hackers to local business owners. I follow e-commerce developments regularly.

The enclosed resume provides detail about my credentials and interests, but I need an opportunity to personally talk to you to best express how I can contribute to Hewlett Packard. Even if you could put me in contact with a local representative as a shadow for a day, my talents would be clearer. I will call you on Wednesday to see when we might be able to get together.

Sincerely,

Edward R. Bell

Enclosures: Resume  
Unofficial Transcript





### Ad Response

#### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Source
- ▶ Credentials
- ▶ Skills
- ▶ Self-description
- ▶ Alternate to experience
- ▶ Weak close

12345 Mason Parkway  
Greenwood, IN 44444  
812-444-4444  
August 20, xxxx

Mr. U. R. Big  
Employment Manager  
Professional Software  
111 Downtown Highrise  
Pittsburgh, PA 15300

Dear Mr. Big:

I am interested in the analyst position you advertised in the *TIMES* on October 15. The requirements match my credentials extremely well. My strengths and talents include:

- Earned a BS degree in finance from Purdue recently
- Worked 20 hours per week in college computer retail store
- Proficient with spreadsheet, database, and desktop publishing software
- Proficient with many financial software packages
- Created several webpages
- Sold and serviced hardware and software to students
- Consistently ranked in top 10 percent of most of my related courses
- Excel in intramural team sports

Your position and my goals and abilities complement each other well in spite of my lack of the two years of full-time experience you prefer. I learn fast, build friendships easily, work well with colleagues, and assume responsibility carefully, which I feel may make up for my lack of the experience you want.

Please review my resume. I would appreciate a chance to tell you how I can contribute effectively and produce handsomely in this job. My e-mail is jenkins.email.com, which is the best way to reach me. I will call you soon.

Sincerely,

Bernice Jenkins

Enclosure: Resume





### Establishing Relationships

#### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Name of recommender
- ▶ Technical orientation
- ▶ Degree and major
- ▶ Technical experience
- ▶ Industry relationship
- ▶ Skill support
- ▶ Meeting location

125 University Quad  
Indiana University  
Bloomington, IN 47400  
812-735-5555  
February 1, xxxx

Dr. Mary Brian Vice President of Research  
New Horizons Communications  
Research Center Park  
Columbia, SC 27100

Dear Dr. Brian:

Dr. Charles Smith in the Indiana University Telecommunications Department informed me of your expansion plans into the satellite transmission business. The University has had a prototype project for the past two years that uses some of the technology that you may be employing, and I have been working part-time with the research equipment. I am interested in opening discussions with you about my possible employment in this new field. Your approach will add some needed competition in the industry.

I will earn a BS degree in physics from Indiana where I also did an interdisciplinary program with the Telecommunications Department. I assist two different professors with installation and research applications in both physics and telecommunications. We have been experimenting with both fiber optics and satellite data communications in conjunction with the University Research Computing Center.

My practical experience coupled with technical report writing and analytical skills has provided me a unique insight into the industry. My senior project involved intersatellite communications. My leadership in the Physics Club enabled me to attend the last National Telecommunications Association meeting in New York City.

My resume and detailed transcript are enclosed, which should give you a strong assessment of my potential. I will call you next week to see if we can get together soon. Since I plan to attend the upcoming TRC meeting, which is being held near your facility, perhaps that might be an appropriate meeting time. Please e-mail me at Lau@e-mail.edu if you want further details on my skills before our meeting.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Lau

Enclosures: Resume  
Unofficial transcript  
Letter of recommendation from Professor Smith





### Recent Systems Graduate

University of Notre Dame  
123 Blue Ridge Road  
Notre Dame, IN 45555  
January 10, xxxx

Mr. Ned Hill  
Director of Information Systems  
Aim Financial Services  
INB Financial Center  
Cleveland, OH 44444

Dear Mr. Hill:

The Career Services Office at Notre Dame recently posted an opening for a systems analyst in your computer center in Cleveland. Being from the vicinity, I know your organization well and feel that my June computer science degree might be of interest.

I have tried to merge my technical skills with some marketing and communication courses. Although I am proficient with several computer languages, my other strength is my ability to work with others, define problems, and present alternate solutions. I am very web proficient.

My activities reveal my talents in working in teams, prioritizing my time commitments, and communicating to large groups. My resume shows the wide variety of experiences that I have enjoyed at Notre Dame.

I would appreciate discussing my interests with you. I will call you within the week to schedule an interview. Please contact me via e-mail at mills@e-mail.com.

Sincerely,

Scott Mills

Enclosure: Resume

#### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Capitalize on university
- ▶ Systems opening
- ▶ Technical qualifications
- ▶ Self-description
- ▶ Nontechnical talents
- ▶ Follow-up plans





### Establishing Fit

#### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Name dropping
- ▶ Labor position
- ▶ Confidence
- ▶ Related experience
- ▶ Commitment
- ▶ Targeted resume
- ▶ Strong wrap-up
- ▶ Anxious to talk
- ▶ Postscript emphasis

Rock Berry Hall  
Evansville, Illinois 47205  
812-344-8888  
May 5, xxxx

Mr. J. B. Price  
Labor Relations Manager  
Golden Enterprises, Inc.  
Chicago, Illinois 50121

Dear Mr. Price:

Dr. C. Randall Powell, Professor of Business Administration at Indiana University, recently suggested that I write you concerning your opening and my interest in a labor relations assistant position. With a B.S. degree in human resource management and courses in labor economics, collective bargaining, and labor law, I am confident that I could make a positive contribution in the position.

The last two summers, I worked as a general laborer on a production line, once in a unionized shop and once in an unorganized plant. My ability to appreciate several points of view on labor problems should prove to be a major asset in my future career performance. Before I left my last summer job, my supervisor had recommended that I be hired as a first-line foreman after graduation. Although I am enthusiastic about the foreman's position, I think my energies and resourcefulness might be better suited to tactfully handling union-management problems as a third party in the grievance steps. This assignment has been a four-year goal for me in college.

My attached resume better highlights my education and experience. My leadership roles in campus politics should strengthen and support my abilities to serve as a labor relations assistant.

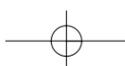
I am anxious to talk with you because I feel I can show you why I am a strong candidate for the position. I have friends in Chicago that I could stay with on weekends so any Friday or Monday would be ideal for an appointment. In three days I will call you to see if your schedule might be open. I look forward to our getting together soon. If you need additional information, please call, write, or e-mail me.

Very truly yours,

James J. Aggressive  
aggressive@e-mail.com

Enclosure

P.S. Dr. Powell indicated that it was okay for me to invite you to contact him for a recommendation at 812-336-5317 or powell@e-mail.com.





### Marketing Opportunity

1400 N. Maple Lane  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
812-335-5555  
outgoing@e-mail.com  
January 13, xxxx

#### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Contact source
- ▶ Credentials
- ▶ Work ethics
- ▶ External orientation
- ▶ Achievements
- ▶ Specific appointment
- ▶ Copied contacts
- ▶ PS for credibility

Ms. U. R. Fashion  
Manager, Organizational Development  
High Fashion Stores, Inc.  
Chicago, IL 60601

Dear Ms. Fashion:

I received your name from the Career Services Office at Indiana University where I am earning a bachelor degree in English. Professor Smith encouraged me to write you about being considered for your executive development program, which starts in June.

Although I am not a business graduate, I have many of the other qualifications you outlined in your website. I have been involved in a leadership capacity in several activities on campus and have worked as a part-time sales clerk in a local specialty shop for the past year. I am familiar with the basic retail sales functions of display, marking, inventories, cash control, advertising, etc., but I need the buyer's perspective.

I really enjoy the public contact and servicing the customer, but I want to get more experience in the buying function, supervision, and general management. As vice president of my sorority, I learned much about management skills. This encouraged me to take two courses in business (accounting and retail marketing), which should help my understanding of your business operations.

I hope to graduate in the top twenty percent of my class. My resume is enclosed.

I hope that we can get together. My personal plans call for a trip to Chicago later next month. Would it be possible for us to meet on February 20? I will call you or your secretary next Tuesday to set up a specific appointment time. Please feel free to contact me at 812-335-5555 or e-mail me if that date is inconvenient. I sincerely appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Susan Outgoing

Enclosures

cc: Professor J. B. Smith  
University Career Services Office





## Financial Opening

Pleasant View Hall  
Floyd Knobs, Indiana  
812-427-7777  
career@e-mail.com  
February 24, xxxx

Mr. J. B. Money, President  
First National Bank  
First and Walnut  
Hoosierland, Indiana 45201

Dear Mr. Money:

In reply to your classified ad in the *Hoosier Banker*, I would like to apply for the Branch Manager Trainee position. I will graduate from DePauw University with an economics major in December.

Because of some part-time work experience in related areas and academic courses in the field, I am very familiar with the various assignments in banking, which is my basic career interest. I read the book, *The Money Changers*, last year, which was recommended by a professor here and was very unhappy with the journalistic liberties taken by Mr. Haley, but I learned a lot that stimulated my interest. The recent article in *Fortune* on women officers in banking convinced me that I made the right decision.

During my first three years at DePauw, I worked as a part-time teller at the University Credit Union. During summers, I worked as a clerk/secretary, basically filling in as vacation relief in several jobs. Beginning my senior year I worked part-time in the Bursar's Office doing odd jobs dealing with dash balances, fee collections, auditing statements, calling on bad debts, report writing, etc. I have taken courses in money and banking, financial institutions, and two courses in accounting and finance, which I took at night school during summers at home.

Because of my desire to locate in a smaller community like yours, I am especially interested in your job. Although it is three months before graduation, I want to make a decision fairly soon. Would you please send me an application and more information about the job and community? I am available for an interview any Monday or Friday, which are my lightest class days. I will call you for an appointment as soon as I receive the application.

Sincerely yours,

Jane Career

### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Trade journal
- ▶ Credentials
- ▶ Career interest
- ▶ Personal orientation
- ▶ Related work
- ▶ Skills
- ▶ Request material
- ▶ Call for appointment





### ***Inexperienced Sales Job***

Apartment 22  
Stone Hill Estates  
Arcola, Ohio 32064  
317-222-2222  
catt@e-mail.com  
February 27, xxxx

#### **KEY POINTS**

- ▶ Question opening
- ▶ Targeted field
- ▶ Personal qualities
- ▶ Industry interest
- ▶ Maturity
- ▶ Regional interview
- ▶ Will call

Mr. C. B. Executive  
Human Resources Manager  
Professional Pharmaceuticals  
Middletown, Michigan 47720

Dear Mr. Executive:

Do you have an opening for a sales representative? With a B.S. degree in marketing and ten hours of chemistry courses at Ohio State University, I think that my academic qualifications and personality are well suited for a career in pharmaceutical marketing.

Two summers and many part-time jobs in sales-related positions have convinced me that sales is the best entry-level position for me to begin my career as a future marketing executive. I value the freedom and independence that you offer an individual after your training program that I read about on your careers website. Each of my previous employers will tell you that I work hard and thrive under pressure and challenge. Although I have not been active in campus life as a leader because I have had to work to get through school, every work supervisor has expressed pleasure at my enthusiasm to serve customers.

In my last experience at Super Drugs, I worked for a pharmacist and talked with several salesmen who called on us. They all commented on the individual rewards of working in the health-related industry. The attached resume only brushes the surface of my qualifications so I hope I have the opportunity to elaborate on my credentials in person.

I am willing to work hard, study, learn, and take responsibility. May I have the privilege of an interview? Since we are several hundred miles apart, would it be possible for me to schedule an initial interview with any of your salesmen in this region? I plan to call you within the week to see if something might possibly be arranged. I need a chance to start as a sales representative because I know I can advance on my own merits with Professional Pharmaceuticals. Please contact me if you need more information.

Very truly yours,

Morris Catt

Enclosure





**Creative Tone**

**KEY POINTS**

- ▶ Attention
- ▶ Humor
- ▶ Credentials
- ▶ Confidence
- ▶ Self-description
- ▶ Personal ad
- ▶ Comparing
- ▶ Contact

301 N. Indiana Avenue  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
812-333-3333  
funn@e-mail.com  
October 4, xxxx

Mr. A. G. President  
President  
President Advertising Agency  
1000 N. Michigan  
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Mr. President:

Advertising's my bag and I'm ready for your game. Aim at me if you want a self-starter and go-getter. For a job as a copy writer/account executive, I offer the following credentials.

- Degree in communications
- Top grades
- Marketing orientation
- Leadership potential
- Gregarious personality
- Pleasing appearance
- Aggressiveness
- Determination

They tell me that no jobs exist in advertising unless you know somebody who knows somebody important. Unfortunately, the important people who know me don't know you. But my credentials are superior and I want to work for you.

Getting a job in advertising is exciting, challenging, and real hard work. It is really testing my communication skills.

Notice the advertising brochure on Roger (some call it a resume). This tacky approach is unique, original, and funny, yet truthful, and I hope it gets my foot into your door. The ad I write for *Advertising Age* cost too much to print, and my old resume wasn't me and hit too many circular files. I'm bettin' on this approach.

I want to work for you and need an interview. You can contact me by returning the handy tear-away order form on the resume brochure (the enclosed coupon will get you a discount). I would like to hear from you soon. To avoid C.O.D. charges, you can expedite matters by calling 812-337-6660 collect today. You can also visit my flashy website at [www.funntimes.com](http://www.funntimes.com) and e-mail comments from the site.

Very truly yours,

R. U. Funn

Enclosure





### Vice President

#### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Ad source
- ▶ Achievement
- ▶ Mutual interests
- ▶ Credentials
- ▶ Recognition
- ▶ Leader
- ▶ Match
- ▶ Get together

1000 S. Montana Road  
Covington, Virginia 20000  
525-525-2525  
success@e-mail.com  
May 1, xxxx

Mr. James Wise, President  
ABM Corporation  
1 City Square  
Superdeal, Wisconsin 10229

Dear Mr. Wise:

Your ad in the *Wall Street Journal* for a vice president of marketing caught my eye. Last year my management ability helped double the sales output of my division while we cut selling costs by 20 percent. A much-needed system of cost controls and implementation of an incentive pay program helped turn around a stagnant growth record in my new division.

I would like to discuss our mutual interests. Although our industries are very different, there are many striking similarities. I believe that my ten years of sales and marketing experience can produce results for you. Briefly, my credentials include the following:

- Technical product knowledge
- Sales management experience
- Record of sales achievement
- Hundreds of recognitions
- E-commerce experience
- Purdue University
- Industrial management
- Salesperson of the Year
- Competitive spirit
- web expertise

My enclosed resume fills in some details I know you will want to confirm. I am proud of my record. I am looking for the "right" step upward. Your company is a recognized leader in the industry, and I have admired the professionalism of your people that I have met. Your job description given in the ad matches my qualifications and goals precisely and I like the web-based marketing that you have been using.

We need to get together. I will call you next week for an appointment. If you need to get together sooner, call me at home any evening (7:00 – 10:00 p.m.). I look forward to our getting together.

Sincerely yours,

J. R. Successful

Enclosure

P.S. Please browse to [www.abm.com/products](http://www.abm.com/products) to see some of my recent innovations.





## Networking Referral

### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Alumni referral
- ▶ Guidance
- ▶ Solid achiever
- ▶ Strong work ethic
- ▶ Location rationale
- ▶ SASA easy reply
- ▶ Collect call
- ▶ Request leads

421 E. Fourteenth Street  
Apartment D-4  
South Bend, Indiana 47401  
317-317-3131  
favours@e-mail.com  
April 2, xxxx

Mr. U. I. Alumnus, Partner  
CPA & Associates  
Woodward and High Streets  
Detroit, MI 38251

Dear Mr. Alumnus:

My accounting professor, Dr. Curt Brown, was recently counseling me on my interest in joining a regional public accounting firm in the Detroit area. I expect to receive a bachelor's degree in accounting from Notre Dame in June. Professor Brown said that you might be able to offer some guidance since you had the same problem a few years ago when you were here.

I have not been an academic superstar, but I have never earned anything less than a "B" grade in accounting, either. I have worked 20 hours each week as a night auditor for the University Union for the past two years, which has limited my extracurricular activities, but working got me through college. During my first two years here, I was quite involved in organizing an intramural softball league for women but wound up umpiring because I needed the money.

Because my fiancé has found an excellent job opportunity with an automotive firm, we have decided to locate in the Detroit area. I am interested in joining a small to medium size public accounting firm. Since few firms that size actively recruit, I need some help in identifying some of the better prospects in the area. My enclosed resume explains why I think I am best suited for this type of firm.

Enclosed is a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Could you take a minute of your time to jot down some appropriate contacts for me? Based on Dr. Brown's comments, I would especially be interested in learning more about your firm. If you think that there is a chance for employment in your firm, would you please give me a collect call? I can get to Detroit on a day's notice. I thank you in advance for any help you can give me. If you prefer to use e-mail, I can get back to you even faster.

Sincerely,

I.O.U. Favours

Enclosure

cc: Dr. Curt Brown





**Direct Contact**

**KEY POINTS**

- ▶ Credentials
- ▶ Position referenced
- ▶ Extensive experience
- ▶ Job knowledge
- ▶ Specific week
- ▶ Calling for time

3950 Forest Avenue  
Columbus, Ohio 42222  
317-317-3131  
hall@e-mail.com  
May 15, xxxx

Mr. Robert Nelson  
American Machine Tool Company  
639 Christopal Drive  
Boston, Massachusetts 00231

Dear Mr. Nelson:

I will be graduating from the Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering this June. Dr. Green, Career Services Director, advised me to contact you directly concerning a position you have open in Research and Development Engineering.

As my enclosed resume indicates, I have had extensive experience in the machine tool business. My work has included the use of physical test equipment, calibration and application of such equipment to solve manufacturing problems, investigation of field service complaints, and complete engineering tests of prototype numerical control lathes and new design machine units.

My experience covers a broad range of engineering functions, which I can further develop with your company to our mutual benefit. I am great at using the www to find technical solutions.

I will be in Boston for about five days in early July. If acceptable, I will call you on June 15 to arrange a convenient time for an interview. I am very interested in working for your company, and I am eager to discuss how I might contribute to your further development.

Very truly yours,

Tom T. Hallgreen

Enclosure

P.S. My website URL is [www.hallsshop.com](http://www.hallsshop.com). It will illustrate some of my R&D interests.

cc: Dr. Green, Career Services Office





### Experienced but Changing Fields

#### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Establishes experience
- ▶ Academic background
- ▶ Related experiences
- ▶ Management talents
- ▶ Sensitivity
- ▶ Quality references
- ▶ Calling soon

25 N. University Avenue  
Columbia, Missouri 50250  
314-314-3131  
bragg@e-mail.com  
February 15, xxxx

Mr. James Shoemaker  
Director of Platform Engineering  
General Motors Corporation  
11 Grease Street  
Detroit, Michigan 42051

Dear Mr. Shoemaker:

I graduated five years ago from the University of Missouri with a degree in Mechanical Engineering and a minor in Business Administration. After reading your advertisement for the "Engineering Supervisor" position posted at the University of Missouri, I am pleased to submit to you my qualifications in the attached resume.

The key to the success of any operation, I feel, is in the attitude of the workers. My experience in construction management, as a construction supervisor on the Valley Nuclear Power Project, has allowed me to develop effective supervisory and motivational skills. I have established a functional rapport with organized labor on site, from labor superintendents to trade apprentices. This job has demanded accurate problem solving and crystal clear instructive communication.

My experience at Chrysler Corporation in St. Louis has not only provided me with insight into large-scale production procedures and problems, but has allowed me an overview of production from the corporate management point of view. As a result, I am aware of the capabilities along with the limitations of a large-scale automotive production operation.

Having some background in football coaching and as a classroom instructor, I am sensitive to the special obstacles encountered in transforming an inexperienced worker into a productive one. Human relations is one of my strengths.

The experiences mentioned above could prove to be most beneficial in the effective management and smooth operation of your workforce. I urge you to contact my former employers listed in the reference section of the attached resume. I look forward to having a chance to talk with you further on this important matter. I shall call you next week after you have had an opportunity to review my application.

Sincerely yours,

James R. Bragg

Enclosure





### Technical Credentials Referral

#### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Employee referral
- ▶ Prestigious institution
- ▶ Technical talents
- ▶ Design engineer
- ▶ Calling date

2375 N. College Road  
Pace, New York 00900  
919-919-9191  
hope@e-mail.com  
May 20, xxxx

Mr. Frank Short  
Director of Engineering  
Aerospace Design, Inc.  
Phoenix, Arizona 89345

Dear Mr. Short:

At the recent manufacturing exhibit in New York City, I became intrigued with your new nose cone design. One of your engineers (Mr. Charles Shears) and I had some interesting discussions about some potential applications I have been investigating. When I told Mr. Shears that I was a recent graduate of New York Technical Institute, he mentioned that you might have an opening on your staff.

I have just received a master's degree in mechanical engineering. I have some experience from my co-op work and a graduate assistantship, which relate to the type of work you are doing. My attached resume explains this in more detail. When you visit my website at [www.hope.edu](http://www.hope.edu) you will see my fascination with satellite launchings.

Mr. Shears indicated that he would recommend that you follow up with me. I would very much like to come to Phoenix and discuss the possibilities of my employment as a design engineer with you. After reviewing my resume and talking with Mr. Shears, I hope that you will decide to allow me the privilege of an interview. I will call you on June 1 to see if we can arrange a suitable interview date.

Very truly yours,

I. M. Hopeful

Enclosure





### Jobs/Location Change

#### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Source
- ▶ Family reasons
- ▶ Background match
- ▶ Achievement record
- ▶ Specific date

11 S. High Street  
Macon, Kentucky 42000  
502-502-0202  
hart@e-mail.com  
May 5, xxxx

Mr. U. R. Big  
Employment Manager  
International Chemicals  
1000 South Grant Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Dear Mr. Big:

Your ad for a Chemical Engineer in the *Chicago Tribune* prompts this inquiry. For family reasons, I find I must leave Kentucky Chemical under the most amicable conditions to return to the Chicago vicinity.

My enclosed resume presents certain aspects of my technical background, which appear to coincide with your needs. My technical training at Illinois Tech and work experience in industrial solvents run parallel to the description you provided in the ad.

My chemical engineering degree includes an internship in the laboratory of one of your major competitors. My two years of chemical engineering experience includes brief exposures to field technical service, product analysis, and, most recently, process control and supervision. My two promotions indicate the positive achievement record which I have earned.

I can be in Chicago any Friday or Monday with a minimum amount of notice. I would like an interview to show you my credentials. I will call you or your secretary on May 10 for a specific appointment time. Please feel free to call me at work at 502-666-1333 if you need to reach me before May 10. My employer is aware of my need to relocate to Chicago soon.

Very truly yours,

Jane Smith-Hart

Enclosure





**Response via E-mail Inquiry**

**KEY POINTS**

- ▶ Source
- ▶ Not perfectly qualified
- ▶ Achievements
- ▶ High interest
- ▶ Courses
- ▶ Location
- ▶ Survey
- ▶ Follow-up

R. R. 13, Box 64  
 Minnville, Ohio 34260  
 525-525-5252  
 around@e-mail.com  
 December 10, xxxx

Mr. J. Paul Big  
 Manager of College Relations  
 Gusher Petroleum  
 Houston, Texas 76106

Dear Mr. Big:

Your advertisement on the bigboard website prompted me to contact you about consideration for a position in chemical engineering. I will receive a bachelor of science degree in biology from Ohio State University in June.

Before you pitch this letter because I am not an engineer, please take a look at my credentials on the enclosed resume. I rank near the top of my class, am senior class president, am captain of the reserve rugby team, am experienced in laboratory techniques, and have organized and supervised a student government project of leasing mini-refrigerators to dorm residents.

I have read the job descriptions for chemical engineers in various employment websites for companies in the drug, chemical, petroleum, and agri-business industries. I have also reviewed some engineering textbooks of my chemical engineering friends. I have the courses, skills, and interest to handle all work assignments even though I don't have the exact degree you are seeking.

My background consists of 18 hours of chemistry, 6 hours in physics, 12 hours in math, and 30 hours in the biological sciences. My advisor, Dr. I. M. Smart, is encouraging me to go to graduate school, but I am more interested in utilizing my background in a practical setting than in a research setting. I also have interests in quality control and production supervision of technical products.

I prefer to locate in your area and am trying to determine if a 1,000-mile trip in late January is worth the cost. I do have relatives with whom I can stay. If you can offer the slightest encouragement to me, I am willing to pay for a trip to the area. Please check the appropriate boxes and return via e-mail. I shall look forward to your reply and hopefully a personal interview. Thank you for your interest and consideration. I will call you after you return this note.

Very truly yours,

C. U. Around

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Call for an appointment.         | <input type="checkbox"/> Recontact in _____ weeks.    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stop in when you get here.       | <input type="checkbox"/> No present background match. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Call when arrive in town.        | <input type="checkbox"/> Return application blank.    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Click here to launch back to me. |   |

Encl.  
 P.S. Visit my web to verify my credentials at [www.around.com](http://www.around.com)!

