

Cover Letter for the Job Application Project

420E: Business Writing for Entrepreneurs

Overview

Employees: In this segment of the job application project, you will be creating application or cover letters that demonstrate your knowledge of the person (i.e. company), includes mention of your most marketable skill(s), and expresses your enthusiasm for the position and group, idea, or project manager (i.e. company) to which you are applying. Using the resources you have gathered to this point as a reference, your application/cover letter should emphasize the skills and information in which this particular project manager will be most interested. Basically, much like your résumés, your cover letter needs to be specifically and sophisticatedly tailored to the job ad (and project manager, company mission, idea, etc.) you have chosen. Further, remember that the cover letter acts as a companion piece to your résumé. That is to say, these two documents work with and off of one another; they are inextricably linked.

Project Managers: Your letter is to function as a solicitation of prospective employees (group members) by positioning you as a successful entrepreneur on this particular project. Your audience is your potential group members, so you need to convince them that *you* are well-positioned to lead a successful group in the development of this specific business idea. Why are *you*, specifically, qualified to lead a team? Why are you prepared to lead a team in the development of a *business plan* (and accompanying documents)? Why are you poised to lead a team in the development of *this* idea? Your cover letter (along with your resume) will be included as part of your dossier as the Project Manager for this entrepreneurial venture and will accompany your Job Ads on the course site.

Deliverable

Employees: You will produce two 1-page application letters.

Project Managers: You will produce one 1-page cover letter.

Application/Cover Letter

You should write a brief (typically, letters stick to one page) formal business letter to the company contact person (project manager or potential employees) that signals your intent to apply for a position that has been advertised or to lead a team to success.

Format and Style

Your application letter should do the following:

- ✓ Apply the design principles discussed in class and be visually pleasing
- ✓ Maintain both grammatical and mechanical correctness (perfection)
- ✓ Consist of one page of well-written prose
- ✓ Use block format (all the sections should begin at the left-hand margin without indentation), as illustrated on the OWL website
- ✓ Be double-spaced between sections, but single-spaced within sections
- ✓ Use a one to one and a half-inch margin on all sides of the page
- ✓ Use a conventional serif font and size—one that is common for body text
- ✓ Be dated
- ✓ Include an inside address
- ✓ Be addressed to a specific person, if at all possible (think of our discussions of)
- ✓ Use the person's official title, avoiding the generic "Dear Sir or Madam" or "To whom it may concern"
- ✓ Use a colon rather than a comma after this address

Content

Your application letter should

- ✓ Be roughly 3-4 paragraphs long
- ✓ Include an introductory paragraph that
 - indicates what job you are applying for
 - indicates where you saw or heard about the job
 - indicates your familiarity with the company and its values
 - expresses your interest in being considered
 - introduces the special credentials that make you qualified for this position
 - indicates your enthusiasm for working for this particular company at this particular job
- ✓ Include middle paragraphs that
 - highlight your best credentials for this particular job, discussing them in more detail than your résumé
 - tailor your credentials for this particular job, company, and recipient
 - begin with your academic degree program (if it is your best credential)
 - begin with your relevant work experience (if it is your best credential)
 - begin with your honors and awards (if it is your best credential)
 - begin with your volunteer work (if it is your best credential)
- ✓ Include a concluding paragraph that
 - indicates your interest in being contacted for an interview
 - indicates when and how you can be contacted (make it easy for them—don't say, "I can be reached at the contact information above.")
 - reiterates your enthusiasm for the position
 - thanks the employer for his/her time and consideration
 - MAYBE lets them know you will follow up in X amount of time

Closing

Your application letter should

- ✓ Include a formal, complimentary closing (Sincerely, or Sincerely yours, ... followed by 4 blank lines for your signature)
- ✓ Be **signed** by you