LESSON 35

RESUME & APPLICATION LETTER

Outline:

Chronological Resume
Application Letters
Two Types of Job Letters
Motivation for Action

Chronological Resume
Name

Address Contact Nos.

Objective

Experience

November 2000 to present

September 1998 to November 2000

Education

1996-1998 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1994-1996 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Personal Details

Language and Technical Skills

Application Letters

Whenever you submit your resume accompany it with a cover, or application letter to let readers know what you’re sending, why you’re sending it, and how they can benefit from reading it because your application letter is in your own style rather than the choppy, shorthand style of your resume.

Send you resume and application letter together, because each has a unique job to perform. The purpose of your resume is to get employers interested enough to contact you for an interview. You can achieve this purpose by doing the following:

• Learn something about the organization you’re applying to and focus on your
 audience.

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• Imagine yourself in the recruiter’s situation.

• Show how your background and talents will solve a particular problem or fill a
 specific need the company has. During your research, find out the name, title of

the person to contact.

• So respect your reader’s time.

• Include nothing in your cover letter that already appears in your resume.

• Keep your letter straightforward, fact-based, short, upbeat, and professional.

Drafting Cover Letter

• Be Specific.

• Avoid general objectives.

• Be as clear as possible about the kind of opportunity and industry you’re looking
 for.

Make Email Cover Even Shorter

When sending a cover letter by e-mail, make it a bit shorter than traditional application letters. Remember, e-mail readers want the gist very quickly.

Aim for high quality. Carefully check your spelling, mechanics, and grammar.
Employers complain about the declining quality of written communication, including
cover letters.

Two Types of Job Letters

Solicited application letter is in response to an announced job opening - you’ll usually
know what qualifications the organization is seeking. You’ll also have more competition
because hundreds of other job seekers will have seen the listing and may be sending
applications too.

Both solicited and unsolicited letters present your qualifications similarly. The main difference is in the opening paragraph. In a solicited letter, you need no special attentiongetter because you have been invited to apply. In an unsolicited letter, you need to start by capturing the reader’s attention and interest.

Getting Attention

Follow the AIDA approach when writing your application letter: attention, interest,
desire, action. Like your resume, your application letter is a form of advertising, so
organize it as you would a sales letter: Use the AIDA approach, focus on your audience,
emphasize reader benefits and make sure your style project confidence. To sell a potential
employer on your merits, you must believe in them and sound as though you do.

An Unsolicited Confident Opening

The opening of an application letter captures attention, gives the reason you’re writing, and states which job you’re applying for. Open a solicited application letter by mentioning how you found out about the position.

Please consider my application for an entry-level position in technical writing. Your firm advertised a position (on September 23, 2006, in the New Sun). With my two years experience, won’t you consider me for that position?

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Building Interest and Increasing Desire

The middle section of your application letter presents your strongest selling points in terms of their potential benefit to the organization, thereby building interest in you and creating a desire to interview you.

The middle section of an application letter does the following.

• Summarize your relevant qualifications

• Emphasize your accomplishments

• Suggests desirable personal qualities

• Justifies salary requirements

• Refers to your resume

Show how your strongest skills will benefit the organization. A 20 years old, his/her third year of college, might begin like this: When you need a secretary in your export division who can take shorthand at 125 words a minute and transcribe notes at 70 - in English, Urdu or Portuguese - call me. Describe your understanding of the job’s requirements and then show how well your qualifications fit them.

Use a question to demonstrate your understanding of the organization’s need.

Can your fast-growing market research division use an interviewer with 1½ years of field survey experience, a B.A in public relations, and a real desire to succeed? If so, please consider me for the position.

Solicited Application Letters

Identify the publication in which the ad ran; then describe what you have to offer.

In the April issue of Travel & Leisure your ad for a cruise-line social director caught my eye. My eight years of experience as a social direction in the travel industry would allow me to serve your new cruise division well.

Spell out a few of your key qualification, and back up your assertions with some convincing evidence of your ability to perform:

Poor: I completed three college courses in business communication, earning an A in each course, and have worked for the past year at Imperial Construction.

Improved: Using the skills gained from three semesters of college training in business communication, I developed a collection system for Imperial Construction that reduced its 2001 bad-debt losses by 3.7 percent, or Rs. 90,000, over those of 2000. Instead of using time worn terminology, the new system’s collection letters offered discount incentives for speedy payment.

The middle of your application letter also demonstrates a few significant job-related qualities, such as your diligence or your ability to work hard, learn quickly, handle responsibility, or get along with people:

While attending college full-time, I trained 3 hours a day with the varsity track team. In addition, I worked part-time during the school years and up to 60 hours a week each summer in order to be totally self-supporting while in college. I can offer your organization the same level of effort and perseverance.

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Another matter you might bring up in this section is your salary requirement - but only if the organization has asked you to state them.

For the past two years I have been helping a company similar to yours, organizes its database. I would therefore like to receive a salary in the same range over twenty for helping your company set up a more efficient customer database.

Toward the end of this section, refer the reader to your resume by citing a specific fact or general point covered there.

Motivating Action

The final paragraph of your application letter has the two important functions:

(1) To ask the reader for a specific action

(2) To make a reply easy. In almost all cases, the action you request is an interview.

(3) Don’t demand it; however, try to sound natural.

After you have reviewed my qualifications, could we discuss the possibility of putting my
marketing skills to work for your company? Because I will be on spring break the week of
March 8, I would like to arrange a time to talk then. I will call in late February to
schedule a convenient time when we would discuss employment opportunities at your
company.

Adapting Style and Approach to Culture

The AIDA approach isn’t appropriate for job seekers in every culture. If you’re applying for a job abroad or want to work with a subsidiary of an organization based in another country, you may need to adjust your tone.

Guideline for Writing Applications Letter

A. Attention (opening paragraph)

1. Open the letter by capturing the reader’s attention in a businesslike way.

2. Use a summary, name, source, question, news, personalized, or creative opening.

3. State that you are applying for a job, and identify the position or the type of work you
seek.

B. Interest and desire, or evidence of qualifications (next several paragraphs)

1. Present your key qualifications for the job, highlighting what is on your resume: job-
related education and training; relevant work experience; and related activities, interests,
and qualities.

2. Adopt a mature, businesslike tone.

3. Eliminate boasting and exaggeration.

4. Back up your claims by citing specific achievements in educational, work, and outside
settings.

5. Demonstrate your knowledge of the organization by citing its operations or trends in the industry.

6. Link your education, experience, and personal qualities to the job requirements.

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7. Relate aspects of your training or work experience to those of the target position.

8. Outline your educational preparation for the job.

9. Provide evidence that you can learn quickly, work hard, handle responsibility, and get along with others.

10. Show that you possess personal qualities and work attitudes that are desirable for job performance.

11. If asked to state salary requirements in your letters, state current salary or a desired salary range, and link it to the benefits of hiring you.

12. Refer the reader to the enclosed resume.

C. Action (Closing Paragraph)

1. Request an interview at the reader’s convenience.

2. Request a screening interview with the nearest regional representative, if company headquarters is some distance away.

3. Make it easy to comply with your request by providing your phone number (with area code) and stating the best time to reach you, or mention a time when you will be calling to set up an interview.

4. Express your appreciation for an opportunity to have an interview.

5. Repeat your strongest qualification to reinforce your claim that you can contribute to the organization.

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