

Making Everything Easier!™

Job Search Letters

FOR
DUMMIES®
A Wiley Brand

Learn to:

- **Get hired with 40 types of job letters**
- **Create short messages for a smartphone world**
- **Network on social media sites**
- **Model best letters with more than 200 pro samples**

Joyce Lain Kennedy

*Author of Job Interviews For Dummies
and Resumes For Dummies*



Get More and Do More at Dummies.com®



Start with **FREE** Cheat Sheets

Cheat Sheets include

- Checklists
- Charts
- Common Instructions
- And Other Good Stuff!

To access the Cheat Sheet created specifically for this book, go to
www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/jobsearchletters

Get Smart at Dummies.com

Dummies.com makes your life easier with 1,000s of answers on everything from removing wallpaper to using the latest version of Windows.

Check out our

- Videos
- Illustrated Articles
- Step-by-Step Instructions

Plus, each month you can win valuable prizes by entering our Dummies.com sweepstakes. *

Want a weekly dose of Dummies? Sign up for Newsletters on

- Digital Photography
- Microsoft Windows & Office
- Personal Finance & Investing
- Health & Wellness
- Computing, iPods & Cell Phones
- eBay
- Internet
- Food, Home & Garden

Find out "HOW" at Dummies.com

*Sweepstakes not currently available in all countries; visit Dummies.com for official rules.



Job Search Letters

FOR
DUMMIES[®]
A Wiley Brand

by Joyce Lain Kennedy

FOR
DUMMIES[®]
A Wiley Brand

Job Search Letters For Dummies®

Published by: **John Wiley & Sons, Inc.**, 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774, www.wiley.com

Copyright © 2013 by Joyce Lain Kennedy

Published simultaneously in Canada

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except as permitted under Sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without the prior written permission of the Publisher. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, (201) 748-6011, fax (201) 748-6008, or online at <http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions>.

Trademarks: Wiley, For Dummies, the Dummies Man logo, Dummies.com, Making Everything Easier, and related trade dress are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc., and may not be used without written permission. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: WHILE THE PUBLISHER AND AUTHOR HAVE USED THEIR BEST EFFORTS IN PREPARING THIS BOOK, THEY MAKE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES WITH RESPECT TO THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK AND SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIM ANY IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. NO WARRANTY MAY BE CREATED OR EXTENDED BY SALES REPRESENTATIVES OR WRITTEN SALES MATERIALS. THE ADVISE AND STRATEGIES CONTAINED HEREIN MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR YOUR SITUATION. YOU SHOULD CONSULT WITH A PROFESSIONAL WHERE APPROPRIATE. NEITHER THE PUBLISHER NOR THE AUTHOR SHALL BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES ARISING HEREFROM.

For general information on our other products and services, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002. For technical support, please visit www.wiley.com/techsupport.

Wiley publishes in a variety of print and electronic formats and by print-on-demand. Some material included with standard print versions of this book may not be included in e-books or in print-on-demand. If this book refers to media such as a CD or DVD that is not included in the version you purchased, you may download this material at <http://booksupport.wiley.com>. For more information about Wiley products, visit www.wiley.com.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013938102

ISBN 978-1-118-43641-7 (pbk); ISBN 978-1-118-43640-0 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-118-43642-4 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-118-43643-1 (ebk)

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contents at a Glance

<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Part I: New Tools for New Times</i>	5
Chapter 1: Best Messages: Land Jobs and Leap Ahead	7
Chapter 2: Mobile Meets Job Search	15
Chapter 3: Newcomer Letters that Persuade	27
<i>Part II: Essential Job Search Letters</i>	45
Chapter 4: Job Ad Reply Letters and Notes	47
Chapter 5: Getting Help: Networking Letters	85
Chapter 6: Prospecting Letters	103
Chapter 7: After-Interview Letters	121
<i>Part III: Creative Fresh Messages</i>	139
Chapter 8: Social Media Messages	141
Chapter 9: Branding Statements, Bios, Profiles, and Speeches	151
Chapter 10: Interview Leave-Behind Docs	183
Chapter 11: References and Recommendations	195
Chapter 12: Online Portfolios, Prezis, and Videos	213
Chapter 13: Getting Ahead in the Job You Have	221
<i>Part IV: Best Writing Elements</i>	235
Chapter 14: Writing Your Way to a Job	237
Chapter 15: Language That Snap-Crackle-Pops	247
Chapter 16: Great Lines for Success	263
Chapter 17: Job Seeker's Skills Finder	279
<i>Part V: The Part of Tens</i>	299
Chapter 18: Remember Ten Social Forget-Me-Not Tips	301
Chapter 19: Top Ten Google Tips for Jackpot Job Search	307
<i>Appendix: Directory of Job Letter Writers</i>	319
<i>Index</i>	327

Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	1
About This Book	1
Foolish Assumptions	2
Icons Used in This Book	3
Beyond the Book	3
Where to Go from Here	3
Your Treasure Hunt Begins	4
<i>Part 1: New Tools for New Times</i>	5
Chapter 1: Best Messages: Land Jobs and Leap Ahead	7
A Brief Kaleidoscope of Letter Types	7
Digital Is Destiny	8
Memorable Job Search Letters	9
Executive position letter	9
Alumni career fair letter	10
Networking letter	12
Why Job Letters Are the Future	14
Chapter 2: Mobile Meets Job Search	15
The FAQs of Mobile Job Search	15
Who Mobile Benefits Most	17
What Mobile Offers Everyone	17
Say Hello to Job Search Apps	18
Greet Mobile Company Job Pages	19
Consider These Message Tips	19
Check Out Sample Mobile Messages	20
Leading with references	22
Replying to job posts	23
Mobile message closers	24
Mobile Job Search in the Digital Age	26
Chapter 3: Newcomer Letters that Persuade	27
13 Messages to Outrun Rivals	28
Accomplishment statements	28
Checklist comparisons	28
Resume addendums	28
Specialty profiles	29

First 90-day forecasts	29
Introduction letters	30
Professional education statements	30
QR-coded letters	30
Job skills checklists	31
Resume letters.....	31
Job offer responses	32
Rejection follow-ups	33
Job return agreements	33
More Cool Job Letters Ahead.....	44

Part II: Essential Job Search Letters..... 45

Chapter 4: Job Ad Reply Letters and Notes 47

Watching for Smooth Moves	48
Magic connectors.....	48
P.S. winners	48
Fast starters.....	49
Praise gold	49
Design arts	49
Graph gems.....	50
Attention grabbers.....	50
Memorable storytellers.....	51
Blue standard bearers.....	52
Main points	52
Making Contact with Cover Notes.....	52
Getting good writing tips	53
Using cover notes for a fast start.....	54
Feasting Your Eyes	54

Chapter 5: Getting Help: Networking Letters 85

Zooming In on Purposeful Networking	85
Advance scouting.....	86
Selective aim.....	86
Finding the Best Places to Network	86
Networking Letters to Note.....	88
Door openers.....	88
Event connections	89
Self-starters.....	89
Digital circuits	90
Help on the Way — Samples Ahead.....	90

Chapter 6: Prospecting Letters 103

Pitch with Immediate Promise.....	103
Send Digital Mail or Postal Mail?	104

Techniques to Tap..... 104
 Eye catchers 104
 Class acts 105
 Rave reviews..... 105
 Important words 106
 High flyers 106
 Storylines 106
 Business boosters..... 107
 Durable styles..... 107
 On with the Letters!..... 107

Chapter 7: After-Interview Letters 121

Great Reasons to Write After Interview 121
 Tackling the Mechanics of Your Letter..... 123
 Letters to Lift You Above the Crowd 123
 Extra helpings..... 124
 People pleasers 124
 Crossover sellers 125
 Matching sets 125
 See Samples That Jell the Sell! 126

Part III: Creative Fresh Messages 139

Chapter 8: Social Media Messages 141

Social Media Is a Tool You Can Learn..... 142
 Meet Three Big Social Players 142
 LinkedIn..... 142
 Facebook..... 143
 Twitter 143
 More sizzling social sites 144
 Suggestions for Social Searching..... 144
 Conducting a LinkedIn search..... 144
 Incorporating your e-mail address book 145
 Becoming a critic and an admirer..... 145
 Sharing with Facebook friends..... 146
 Including people outside your industry..... 146
 Short and Sweet Social Messages..... 146
 “If You Don’t Ask, You Don’t Get”..... 150

Chapter 9: Branding Statements, Bios, Profiles, and Speeches . . . 151

Differing Points of View 152
 Buttoning Down Your Brand 152
 Ingredients for a branding message 153
 Where to place your message 153
 What branding statements look like..... 154
 See more branding statements 157

Creating a Marvelous Bio	162
Four more bio tips	163
What bios look like	164
Aiming High with a Bio Flyer	169
What bio flyers look like	169
Perfecting an Online Profile.....	172
Online profiles vs. resumes	172
Ten tips to improve your profile.....	173
What professional profiles look like.....	175
Going Up in an Elevator Speech.....	178
Eight tips to enjoy the ride	178
What elevator speeches look like	180
Common Threads for Your Search.....	181
Chapter 10: Interview Leave-Behind Docs	183
A Leave-Behind Brings You to Mind	183
Reinforce your strengths	184
Distinguish yourself from the competition.....	184
Jumpstart your follow-up.....	184
15 Leave-Behind Topics to Remember	185
Writing Effective Leave-Behinds	187
Review Samples of Leave-Behinds	187
Chapter 11: References and Recommendations	195
Reference ABCs You Don't Want to Miss	195
With the Right References, You Rock!	196
Reference lists	197
Reference commentaries	198
Job search letter quotes	198
Letters of recommendation	199
Personal character references	200
Social media references	201
Handle Reference Problems Skillfully	202
Fighting back in reference trouble spots	202
Tiptoeing under the radar screen.....	204
Put Time on Your Side	204
Chapter 12: Online Portfolios, Prezis, and Videos	213
Best Prospects for Telling Your Story	213
Rewards of Online Presentations	214
Attract Interest with a Work Portfolio	215
Electrify Employers with a Prezi.....	217
Prezi fundamentals	217
Prezi job seeker samples	218
Video: Hiring Tool or Turnoff?	218
Virtual Job Search is Racing Ahead.....	219

Chapter 13: Getting Ahead in the Job You Have	221
Messages That Grow Your Career	221
Asking for a pay raise	222
Requesting a promotion.....	224
Applying for an internal job vacancy	226
Asking for a lateral move	227
Cover Your Bases with Workplace Docs	228

***Part IV: Best Writing Elements* 235**

Chapter 14: Writing Your Way to a Job237

Zooming In on the Basics	237
Advantages of Stand Out Letters	238
Disadvantages of Stand Out Letters	240
Unfreezing Writer's Block.....	240
Ugly Typos, Sloppy Letters, Few Offers.....	241
Overcoming What-If Worries.....	242
The Anatomy of a Job Search Letter.....	243
Contact information	243
Date line and inside address	243
Salutation	244
Introduction.....	244
Body.....	244
Conclusion	245
Closing, signature, and enclosure line	245
Get Ready to Write	245

Chapter 15: Language That Snap-Crackle-Pops247

Refreshing Your Language	247
So why are you writing?.....	247
So what? How does it matter?	248
Technical versus nontechnical language.....	249
Concise but thorough.....	249
Active versus passive voice	254
Past versus present tense.....	255
Tune Up Grammar and Punctuation	255
Sentence fragments	255
Run-on sentences.....	256
Dangling participles.....	256
Misplaced modifiers	256
Semicolons.....	257
Punctuation in parenthetical expressions.....	257
Hyphens	258
Abbreviations	258



Numbers.....	259
Commas.....	259
Capitalization.....	260
Getting Your Grammar Guide On	260
Organizing Your Information	261
Reading for Smoothness	262

Chapter 16: Great Lines for Success 263

Great Starts for Your Letter	264
Dropping names.....	264
Defining your wants.....	264
Telling a story.....	264
A Sampling of Grand Openers.....	265
Leadoff Losers.....	268
Salutation Snoozers.....	269
Power Phrases to Use Anywhere.....	270
An Action Close to Keep Control.....	273
Action close.....	273
Action close plus.....	274
No-action close.....	275
Examples of the Action Closes.....	275
P.S. A Final Important Point	277
Great Lines to Woo Reluctant Readers.....	278

Chapter 17: Job Seeker's Skills Finder 279

Decoding the Skills Lineup	279
Foundation skills.....	280
Where there's a skill, there's a way.....	282
Speaking Out about Your Skills	283
Foundation skills checklist	284
Crossover skills checklist	288
Showcasing Popular Skills that Employers Want	295
Identifying Personal Qualities That Employers Want	296
Giving Serious Thought to Certifications	297
Crash course on certification.....	297
What's certification worth?	298
Good Luck on the Great Skills Search.....	298

Part V: The Part of Tens 299

Chapter 18: Remember Ten Social Forget-Me-Not Tips 301

- Going Social on the Job Front 302
 - Spread job search news with caution 302
 - Establish yourself as an expert 302
 - Find role models and mirror them 303
 - Send thank-you notes to new connections 303
 - Sleuth for useful company research..... 303
 - Regularly check your social sites 303
 - Tweet for quality, not quantity 304
 - Use common sense to avoid rejection 304
 - Match social media to your type of job 304
 - Don't assume that social is all you need..... 305
- What's Next in Social Search..... 305

Chapter 19: Top Ten Google Tips for Jackpot Job Search 307

- Welcome to the Wide World of Google..... 307
 - Learn Google ground rules 307
 - Search for bingo! answers..... 308
 - Search many faces of job titles 310
 - Monitor your good name 311
 - Uncover hidden jobs 311
 - Pinpoint recruiters and hiring managers..... 312
 - Think like a detective for interview prep..... 315
 - Avoid layoffs and sidestep bad jobs..... 316
 - Use alerts to stay alert 317
 - Explore the Google universe 318
- New Game: "Hide and Seek and Find" 318

Appendix: Directory of Job Letter Writers 319

- About the Sample Writers 319
- A Glossary of Professional Certifications 323
- Professional Organizations 324
- About Hiring a Professional Job Search Letter Writer..... 325
- 5 Tips for Choosing Job Search Writers 325

Index 327

Introduction

Right now, you hold in your hands a key to today's successful job search. *Hint: Your challenge isn't like it was even five years ago.*

Communications and technology are two gigantic change factors that are rapidly transforming both the materials and the methods of finding and nailing down a job. The two factors are connected.

Communications. Joining resumes as staples of employment tools, an explosion of job search messaging is emerging to benefit job seekers everywhere in any career field or industry.

For brevity, I use the term “job search letters” in this work to mean all messaging that promotes job finding and career health. I identify many *categories* of job search letters that you can write to get what you want. Key messaging *formats* include the following:

Letters	E-mails	Profiles
Memos	Text messages	Bios
Multimedia	Reports	Prezis
Video	Checklists	Mobile messages

Technology. An almost unimaginable amount of technological innovation is reshaping how messaging moves in the marketplace of jobs. Most of it is digital, ranging from social media networking and public profile posting, to mobile job app responses and information intended to automatically match jobs and candidates.



Despite mind-blowing change now and tomorrow, bear in mind that technology does not and cannot replace human interaction at every turn of the employment process. For that reason, a number of the sample job search letters in these pages are intended to be passed by hand, depending on the circumstances.

About This Book

This guide to modern job search communications wouldn't have been possible without the outstanding collaboration of 42 top-shelf professional

career messaging writers who provided the message samples throughout its pages.

The professional writer's name is credited beneath each sample. Find the writer's contact information in the Directory of Job Letter Writers, which is printed in the appendix of this book.

Job Search Letters For Dummies replaces three editions of *Cover Letters For Dummies*.

Foolish Assumptions

I assume that you chose this book because your job search is on your mind, perhaps as a new graduate fresh from college with scant working experience, or as a career changer seeking to make a leap into a different field, or as a seasoned worker wondering how to get ready for the next future challenge.

More specifically, I'm also making these assumptions:

- ✔ You may feel as though good things never seem to happen in your job world. Have you considered the possibility that you don't market your abilities robustly enough in a tight economy?

The arsenal of messaging samples in these pages offers new ideas about how to communicate your true worth.

- ✔ You're job hunting, but you've never written any kind of job search letter that landed you an interview. (Putting recruiters to sleep, are you?)

Now you're ready to step up your game and learn from samples of how today's writing pros do it. You sense that this is the right guidebook to help you pick up the know-how to look job perfect to employers stuck in hiring paralysis.

- ✔ You're employed but concerned about or dissatisfied with your current work situation. You're looking for escape routes if push comes to shove — but you need the right message tools to look vibrant in modern times.

- ✔ You're ready to move up in rank and money, but all is quiet on the management front. You've heard a story about an audacious soul who won a nice promotion by writing a request justifying it, and of another individual who fired up her keyboard to ask for a pay bump, and the money flowed. You're ready to learn how to write letters like that.

Icons Used in This Book

For *Dummies* signature icons are the little round pictures you see in the margins of the book. I use them to call your attention to key bits of information. Here's a list of the icons you find in this book and what they mean.



This icon signals situations in which you may find trouble if you don't make a good decision.



Some points in these pages are so useful that I hope you'll keep them in mind as you read. I make a big deal out of these ideas with this icon.



This icon directs your full attention to compelling messages that make you stand out from the crowd.



Here I flag advice and information that can spark a difference in the outcome of your career message.

Beyond the Book

In addition to the goodies contained in this book, *Job Search Letters For Dummies* comes with some access-anywhere material on the web. Check out the free Cheat Sheet at <http://www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/jobsearchletters> for additional helpful letter-writing suggestions.

Where to Go from Here

If you're in a tight spot and don't have the time to start with Chapter 1 and read this book cover to cover, please allow me to make a few suggestions to get you off to a good launch.

When you need to dive into specific information, the Table of Contents is your guide to grab the immediate info you need. The Index is another place to cherry-pick the answers you want.

Additionally, here are several targeted call-outs:

- ✔ When you aren't up on the framework of mobile search and social media, read Chapters 2 and 8. I've tried not to go overboard on the techie talk, but offer only enough to get you onboard today's job search functions.
- ✔ When you've just spotted an advertised job opening you want, cut to the chase: Immediately read Chapter 4.
- ✔ When you need to make a move fairly quickly, but you have no advertised jobs you want to claim, head straight for Chapters 1, 2, 5, 6, and 8 through 12.

Your Treasure Hunt Begins

Within this guide's pages you'll find more than 40 valuable new types of documents to send your career soaring. Seek and find samples of these kinds of job search letters:

accomplishment statement, checklist comparison, resume addendum, specialty profile, first 90-day forecast, introduction letter, skills checklist, resume letter, job offer response, rejection follow-up, job return agreement, job ad reply, networking letter, prospecting letter, after-interview letter, social media message, mini-message text, branding statement, bio, bio flyer, professional profile, elevator speech, leadership initiatives summary, occupational highlights, cultural fit statement, industry experience statement, job training snapshot, project plan review, certifications list, performance snapshot, strengths summary, education achievements report, best work portfolio, sales skills index report, qualifications-job ad requirements display, reference list, reference compendium, recommendation letter, online work portfolio, prezi, and videoclip message.

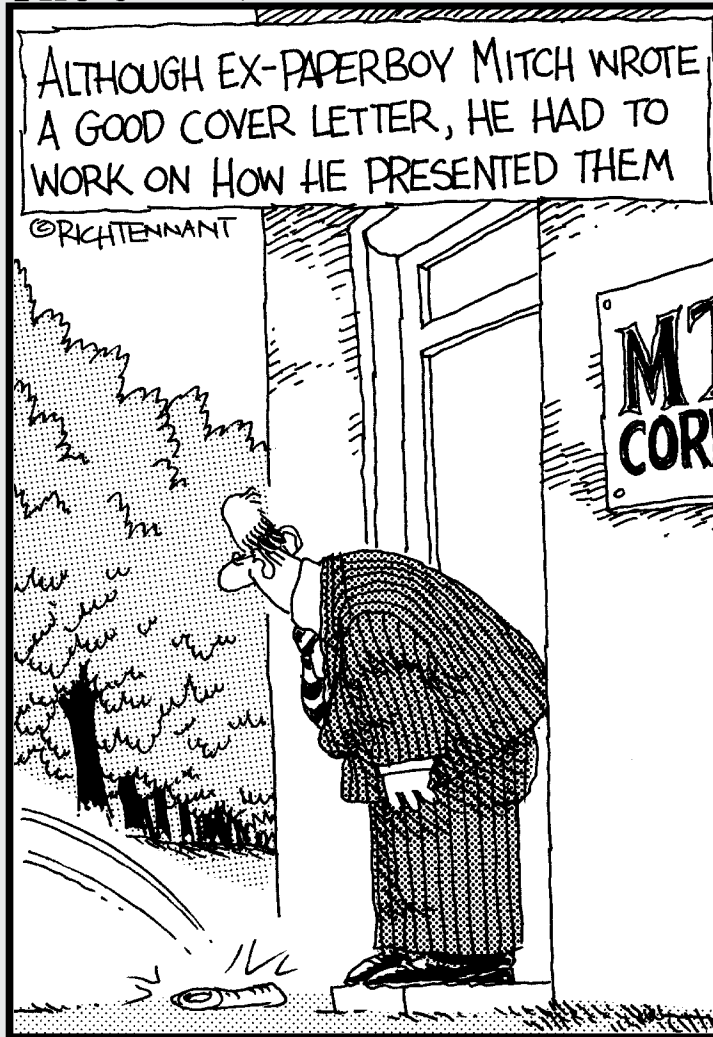
Treasure hunts are great fun but this isn't a kid's game. A rewarding career is your grand prize in a changed job market where you need all the clues you can get.

Part I

New Tools for New Times

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



In this part . . .

Do you know what kind of power a well-crafted marketing message can bring to your search for a good job? Rather than allow a job search letter to merely introduce your resume, give it the wings to make your image soar! In this part, you find out how a job search letter can bring the right kind of attention your way.

Chapter 1 discusses all that job search letters can be and all that they can do for you. Chapter 2 leads you down the dynamic mobile path. Discover the new age of job search letters. Finally, Chapter 3 contains newcomers to the job search letter arena that not only give you extra help to get hired, but illustrates how a wise addition of collateral documents can add lift-off to your career future.

Chapter 1

Best Messages: Land Jobs and Leap Ahead

In This Chapter

- ▶ Saying hello to a bevy of winning messages in the New Digital Age
 - ▶ Learning the ropes of writing great job search letters from top pro writers
 - ▶ Guarding your new letters' good looks as they travel online to change your life
-

A new blast of recruiting technology is blowing the hinges off the way we once pursued a job search when we applied, got a call, went in for an interview, and either got hired or continued looking until we hit pay dirt.

Just as computers and the Internet forever changed the way job seekers *find* hiring companies, digital technology is forever changing the way job seekers *sell* hiring companies.

This book, aimed at virtually every job seeker, is rich with sample letters showing you how to sell companies on the benefits of hiring you. You'll find a wealth of letters to grow your know-how in Chapters 4 through 11.

There's more. After you're hired, you'll want to be rewarded for your valuable work with a boost in money and clout. That's why Chapter 13 contains more sample letters, to help you accomplish your career progression.

A Brief Kaleidoscope of Letter Types

More specifically, you may be amazed at the number of purposes you can accomplish with solid job search letters. The following thumbnail roster summarizes the kinds of career-growing letters that can speed you on your way and that you'll find in the chapters ahead:

- ✔ **Getting hired:** Job ad reply, online cover note, checklist match of qualifications with job requirements, accomplishments sheet, job fit statement, first 90 days work product goals projection, reference commentary,

employee referral memo, contract and job-bidding application, prospecting letter, networking letter, after-interview letter, interview leave-behind supplement, and interest revival letter.

- ✓ **Getting modern:** Mobile text message, social media message, branding brief, bio, profile, online work portfolio, prezi, and video interview.
- ✓ **Getting ahead:** Internal requests for promotion, raise, company job vacancy, and lateral move within company.

Job search letters may be postal mailed, courier delivered, personally hand delivered, or, far more likely, moved by digital computer technology. Digital technology has become the leading method of delivering job search letters, as the following section observes.

Digital Is Destiny

Digital technology keeps churning out new ways for people to connect and communicate in the job market. Why isn't innovation slowing down or taking a breather?

Three words sum up the answer: *smarter, faster, cheaper*. That's essentially the motivation for recruiters (who pay the bills) and inventors (who sell to recruiters) to continue coming up with new technical twists in the job market.

What's more, digitally native generations represent a growing proportion of the working population. Young adults — who teathed on the Internet and texted most of their messages — represent an increasingly larger share of the labor market.

Among important contemporary categories of recruiting and job search technology are the following four headliners:

1. **Mobile.** The use of smartphones and tablets to job-hunt is spreading across the planet like wildfire, even among workers older than 30. Chapter 2 is devoted to the ins and outs of mobile job search.
2. **Social.** The explosion of social media means more information is available about candidates than ever before; it even elbows in on unfavorable data candidates prefer to keep out of public view. There are two sides to the social digital coin:

Social discovery makes it easier for recruiters to find candidates for specific positions.

- Social communication makes it easier for job seekers to find jobs and references in ways never before possible.

The growth in time spent on social media is largely tied to the skyrocketing spread of smartphones. Chapter 8 looks at letters for social media.

- 3. Search automation.** Until two decades or so ago, job applications were filled with candidate-supplied, or *internal*, information and were kept in filing cabinets. Now they're kept on computers in applicant tracking systems (ATS). Hiring actions include *external* information gathered online in social searching.

Contemporary ATS technologies automate a comprehensive review of candidates that includes both internal and external information by using computer formulas called algorithms.

- 4. Predictive analytics.** In making hiring decisions, predictive analytics means sophisticated software used to predict a candidate's future performance. Statistics in candidate selection add to or complete with human judgment.



When a job change is on your agenda, it's essential to Google your name once a week to see what recruiters are spotting. This exercise means more than searching for embarrassing personal moments. It means updating your old profiles and revising any other data that can disqualify you for the type of job you're chasing.

Memorable Job Search Letters

The transforming power of digital technology encourages a strategy of writing your way forward with messages that ask for advice and information, help from professional contacts, assistance from a former business coworker, or consideration from a recruiter.

Digital technology makes it practical for you to take another bite of the apple in pitching a hiring manager after a turn-down, asking for a part-time gig, or helping in researching a potential job.

Your letters have to be worth reading, whether by a recruiter, a hiring manager, or an automated system. Three outstanding job letter examples follow.

Executive position letter

Very well-written job search letters are critical when you're chasing highly competitive employment positions, such as senior executive, scientist, technologist, upper-level government employee, college professor, attorney, or other upscale occupation.

The following sample letter by Debby Ellis, Phoenix Career Group in Houston, illustrates quality writing that's always appropriate for an executive position.

Gerald F. Fox

Chief Operations Officer

[Date]

Dennis Paige, Chief Executive Officer
XYZ Transportation
3100 Space Center Boulevard
Houston, TX 77059

Dear Mr. Paige,

America is innovating again. Just one important example is the successful landing of the Mars probe, *Curiosity*. But to be and stay competitive in today's global economy, *every* manufacturing enterprise is obliged to remain vigilant in their approach to operations ... the challenge, always, is to outperform the competition. This is where I offer the most value.

XYZ Transportation offers everything the next stage in America's technology evolution requires, but it is my belief that to compete successfully and profitably deliver this business, you need an operations leader that can return your high-tech manufacturing to double-digit profitability. I know how it will work, because I've done it before. Specifically, I offer:

- Experience and success building and managing high-value manufacturing organizations.
- Expertise in leveraging lowest-cost supply chain processes to create competitive advantage, improve profits and enhance value.
- Mastery in the seamless setup and integration of globally centralized SAP platforms.
- Extensive experience, advanced degrees and current certifications in engineering, technology and program management.

To demonstrate my level of interest, I have developed a series of presentations outlining my ideas for: Implementing Engineering-Centric Manufacturing Methodologies; Reducing Supply Chain Cost While Maintaining Quality; and Leveraging Information To Improve Efficiency. I will deliver the work samples to your Executive Committee by courier over the next three business days.

If you are interested in discussing more details, I can be reached at 123-456-7890, or you can send me an email, jerry.fox@gmail.com, and I will respond quickly. I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jerry Fox

POB 430, Houston TX 77030 • (C) 123-456-7890 • jerry.fox@gmail.com • <http://www.linkedin.com/in/jfox> • [@jfoxceo](mailto:jfoxceo)

Debbie Ellis, MRW, Phoenix Career Group — Houston, Texas

Alumni career fair letter

The main idea: When attending a college career fair, a simple tactic makes you stand out from the fair's endless flow of visitors: Leave your resume at

each booth with a customized cover letter that features a facsimile of your college's logo.

Cast your eyes on the following sample letter from imaginative Atlanta-based resume writer Sharon M. Bowden.



Frank A. Strickland
Nashville, Tennessee 34968
(310) 555-1212 • Email@email.com

Alumni Career Fair – Wednesday, April 18, 20xx

Thank you for participating in Vanderbilt's Alumni Career Fair. It is good to see [Company Name], such a well respected company, represented today. As a Class of 20xx graduate with a **Bachelor of Science in Accounting**, I have been working as a **CPA** for a small accounting firm for the last few years. While I enjoy my work, I have decided it is time to pursue additional challenges in the area of mergers and acquisitions, for which you are well known. Below are a few accomplishments:

- Provide comprehensive approach to tax planning for 16 companies with annual revenues that exceed \$50 million
- Recognized in writing by clients for outstanding achievement in the areas of risk management, compliance and reporting
- Selected as a member of Vanderbilt's Distinguished Alumni Council

The odds are my financial acumen, discipline, and strong work ethic would be an asset to your organization. Additionally, I am interested in travel as I am fluent in English, French, and Spanish and lived abroad for a number of years. Again, thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to speaking with you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Frank A. Strickland

Attachment: Resume

Letter perfect design, now what?

Employers and various collectors of resumes, applications, and other job search letters use an applicant tracking system (ATS) to automatically read and process job communications and manage the hiring or storage process. All ATSs are not the same; they vary in their degree of sophistication.

You can send your resume letters by postal mail or by e-mail, but when your letter contains graphic design elements, postal mail is the safer choice. Here's why:

Sending design-dependent letters online may create "very ugly cover letters," Jim Lemke explains. Lemke, the technical reviewer for all of my *For Dummies* career books, reports that, while most applicant tracking systems retain the native format (MS Word, for example) for both resumes and cover letters, others do not.

"Cover letter formatting gets messed up in some systems because the system keeps only the resume in native format and converts cover letters to text," Lemke says.

"You can, of course, call the HR office at a target company where you plan to send a

graphically enriched cover letter and just ask, "Does your applicant tracking system retain cover letters in native format or convert them to text?" Lemke notes, "and to double-check, ask the same question about resumes."

Renowned career coach Ralph Haas (career-doctor.com) offers yet another reason for using postal mail: "After you have submitted your credentials through appropriate web-based channels, consider printing your resume and cover letter on high-quality white paper and sending it to an actual human being via snail mail. Your cover letter can refer to the fact that you have — as asked — submitted your resume via appropriate channels, but you hoped that this additional follow-up would underscore your interest in the position."

Career guru Susan Whitcomb (susanwhitcomb.com) advises, "Get your resume into a target company's database, have it hand-delivered by internal contacts in the target company to the hiring manager (not HR), and send it as a follow-up after meeting with networking contacts."

Networking letter

Countless surveys of job seekers rate networking as indispensable. Chapter 5 offers 15 excellent samples, and here's one more. The following sample, written by resume writer Joellyn Wittenstein Schwerdlin in Worcester, Mass., demonstrates vividly how effective messages can be constructed with brevity and clarity, as well as warmth.

From: Connie Anderson
To: Margaret White
Date: [Date]
Subject: Girl Scouts of White Plains, New York

Hi Margaret,

My name is Connie Anderson and I'm in a job search networking group facilitated by Jo Anne Schmidt.

When I mentioned my upcoming interview for the position of "Recruiter/Memberships" with the Girl Scouts of White Plains, Jo Anne thought you might be able to help me. She said you worked for this region for about two years as a business development consultant.

Of course, I buy Girl Scout cookies every year from neighbors and friends and am familiar with the Girl Scout mission. But I'd love to get an insider's perspective about the organization, to help me prepare for the interview.

Can we schedule a brief phone chat, to discuss further? I would really appreciate any insights you can offer me.

Thanks very much in advance. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,
Connie Anderson
c-anderson@anyisp.net
555-555-5555

Joellyn Wittenstein Schwerdlin, CCMC, JCTC — Worcester, Mass.

Should you use a template?

A cover letter makes your first impression on an employer. Show that your strengths fit the target job like green on grass. When you're tempted to scout the Web for one of those free

cover letter templates for which the only heavy lifting required is filling in the blanks, remember the downside: You risk exchanging time saved for opportunity lost.

Why Job Letters Are the Future

The word is out about another technological gee-whiz product being tested as this book goes to press: *smartglasses*. Slipping a pair of smartglasses on your face can alert you to jobs in your area while you're moving about. Or as someone has observed, "Get ready for eyewear that brings computing to your corneas." (Personally, I'm holding out for dentistry that brings computing to your wisdom teeth.)

The serious job seeker can't brush off speed-racing of new digital technologies to automate hiring conclusions drawn from massive amounts of data. Just don't mistake the technological medium for the marketing message.

The message is how you communicate your value to employers who will pay you for it. The message is how you communicate your job fit to employers who insist on knowing it.

It's the message that's important, not the medium that delivers the message.

The strategy of using effective modern job search messages presents a golden opportunity to own the narrative of why you're a perfect choice for the job you seek. And after you write your way onto a payroll, keep writing your way forward with career-management messages. Please continue reading: You'll find 188 terrific samples to light your way.



Communications skills most people commonly use today for job finding and job growing aren't up-to-speed for the emerging world. If you're in the left-behind category, here's your chance to catch up and zoom into the future.

Technology meets autotranslation

How can you write your job search letters and resume in language A, your native tongue, but apply in language B for work in another country? The rise of new technology makes it happen.

Google Translate (translate.google.com) creates an automated translation of your written job

search docs with a few clicks on a computer. Moreover, a host of jaw-dropping translation apps have descended on smartphones — you merely point your camera at a block of text and see it translated on your phone.

Chapter 2

Mobile Meets Job Search

In This Chapter

- ▶ Checking out job hunting in a smartphone world
 - ▶ Discovering what mobile search offers you — or not
 - ▶ Using today’s job search apps to find work
 - ▶ Welcoming mobile-enabled company career pages
 - ▶ Creating great messages to use in mobile job search
-

Finding a job with a smartphone or tablet is no longer breaking news. Mobile job search is here right this very minute!

Even the formerly staid *New York Times* — nicknamed “The Old Gray Lady” — has adopted a mobile attitude. Joining countless numbers of today’s media enterprises, the famous national newspaper has redesigned its popular online publication, *Today’s Headlines*, to be more readable on the mobile digital devices you carry around with you.

Who else has mobile on the mind? Job seekers are racing to hunt for employment anytime, anywhere. A recent major breakthrough in recruiting technology made the mobile gold rush possible. Until that happened, candidates couldn’t submit a complete job application on a mobile device.

Although substantial problems remain in mobile technology, job seekers can use it on any device that has Internet access. Typically, this means a smartphone or tablet, but it also means a laptop or desktop.



Companies that capitalize on mobile moves seem to knock on new digital doors every week. This chapter presents *job messaging* as currently shaped by the key basics of mobile development.

The FAQs of Mobile Job Search

What does *FAQs* mean? It’s an acronym, abbreviation, or slang word that means “Frequently Asked Questions.” Websites often post *FAQs* pages to

share essential information about the site. Here's your chance to grab six fast answers to how to connect with a new job when you're on the move:

✔ **Which smartphones and tablets are most used in mobile search?**

Android (Google), iPhone (Apple), BlackBerry (RIM), and Windows (Microsoft) currently are the four leading smartphones and tablet computers job seekers use to search job boards, apply for jobs, obtain job interviews, video interview from their mobile device, and more.

✔ **Where can you find jobs via mobile devices?**

The three basic sources for mobile discovery of jobs are job boards, job search apps, and web-enabled company job pages.

✔ **Can I apply for all jobs from my mobile device?**

No. Chris Forman, online job search guru and CEO of Startwire.com, says some kinks remain to be worked out in mobile search:

“As of mid-2013, about one to two jobs in five were mobile enabled (optimized for a mobile experience, or offer a simple enough application process that they can be completed effectively on a small digital device).”

✔ **How easy is it to apply for a job and send your resume?**

Forman also cautions that ease of submission and resume access vary:

“A key benefit of mobile job search is the ability to submit your resume along with a job application. Check to see whether your smartphone's operating system allows you to save a resume on your phone. If so, is it easy to work with — or a pain to use?”

✔ **Can you send customized resumes and cover letters on a mobile device?**

Yes and no. If your device can handle resumes and cover letters, prepare in advance. Write and store a number of versions of key job search messages either in free job search apps (which I discuss later in this chapter) or in free file-sharing services, such as Dropbox (dropbox.com) and Google Drive (drive.google.com).

Matching your qualifications to a job ad's requirements is critical. When responding to a job ad, choose the version of your document that most closely meets the requirements of the specific job you seek, and then tailor it as much as possible. The key to being hired, whether or not there is an opening, is customizing your approach.

Don't expect to do serious, large-scale editing from your mobile device, especially one without a mouse-type pointer function. Editing is painstaking work and a tar pit for errors, especially when using miniature keyboards.

Career strategist and coach E. Chandlee Bryan suggests a speedy way to produce mobile messages: “Simply compose sentences or important phrases on a laptop or desktop — and cut and paste them into your smartphone or tablet.”

