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# Job Search Letters

FOR  
**DUMMIES**<sup>®</sup>  
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*





**by Joyce Lain Kennedy**

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DUMMIES<sup>®</sup>  
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## **Job Search Letters For Dummies®**

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# Introduction

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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 5<sup>th</sup> 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

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### ***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](mailto:jerry.fox@gmail.com), and I will respond quickly. I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
*Jerry Fox*

---

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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.