

Ninth Edition

# The Business Writer's Handbook

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Bedford/St. Martin's

Boston ♦ New York

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*Text Design:* Books By Design, Inc.

*Cover Design:* Billy Boardman

*Cover Photo:* Skyscraper © Frederic Cirou

*Composition:* Pine Tree Composition, Inc.

*Printing and Binding:* RR Donnelley & Sons Company

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2007943427

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Manufactured in the United States of America.

3 2 1 0 9 8  
f e d c b a

*For information, write:* Bedford/St. Martin's, 75 Arlington Street,  
Boston, MA 02116 (617-399-4000)

ISBN-10: 0-312-47709-0 (paperback)

ISBN-13: 978-0-312-47709-7 (paperback)

ISBN-10: 0-312-57510-6 (hardcover)

ISBN-13: 978-0-312-57510-6 (hardcover)

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Figure A-6. Adjustment Letter (When Company Is at Fault). Reprinted with the permission of American Airlines, AMR Corporation, Inc. All rights reserved.

Figure B-1. Corporate Blog. From <http://fastlane.gmblogs.com/archives/2007>. Reprinted with the permission of General Motors Corporation.

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- ▶ *I*'s need to be distinguished from the number 1.
- ▶ Check for any c.o.d.'s.

Generally, however, add only *s* in roman (or regular) type when referring to words as words or capital letters. See also italics.

- ▶ Five *ands* appear in the first sentence.
- ▶ The applicants received *As* and *Bs* in their courses.

Do not use an apostrophe for plurals of abbreviations with all capital letters (PDFs) or a final capital letter (ten Ph.D.s) or for plurals of numbers (7s, the late 1990s).

## appendixes

An appendix, located at the end of a formal report, proposal, or other long document, supplements or clarifies the information in the body of the document. Appendixes (or *appendices*) can provide information that is too detailed or lengthy for the primary audience of the document. For example, an appendix could contain such material as maps, statistical analysis, résumés of key personnel involved in a proposed project, or other documents needed by secondary readers.

A document may have more than one appendix, with each providing only one type of information. When you include more than one appendix, arrange them in the order they are mentioned in the body of the document. Begin each appendix on a new page, and identify each with a letter, starting with the letter *A* (Appendix A: Sample Questionnaire). If you have only one appendix, title it simply "Appendix." List the titles and beginning page numbers of the appendixes in the table of contents.

## application letters

When applying for a job, you usually need to submit both an application letter (also referred to as a *cover letter*) and a résumé. Employers may ask you to submit them by standard mail, online form, fax, or e-mail. See also job search and letters.

The application letter is essentially a **sales letter** in which you market your skills, abilities, and knowledge. Therefore, your application letter must be persuasive. The successful application letter accomplishes four tasks: (1) It catches the reader's attention favorably by describing how your skills will contribute to the organization, (2) it explains which particular job interests you and why, (3) it convinces the reader that you are qualified for the job by highlighting and interpreting the particularly impressive qualifications in your résumé, and (4) it requests an interview. See also **correspondence**, **interviewing for a job**, **persuasion**, and **salary negotiations**.


The sample application letters shown in Figures A–8 through A–10 follow the structure described in this entry. Each sample's **emphasis**, **tone**, and **style** are tailored to fit the applicant's experience and the particular **audience**. Note that the letter shown in Figure A–9 matches the résumé in Figure R–7 (“Joshua S. Goodman”) and the letter sent as an e-mail in Figure A–10 matches the résumé in Figure R–8 (“Robert Mandillo”).

## Opening

In the opening paragraph, provide **context** by indicating how you heard about the position and name the specific job title or area. If you have been referred to a company by an employee, a career counselor, a professor, or someone else, be sure to say so. (“I have recently learned from Jodi Hammel, a graphic designer at Dyer/Khan, that you are recruiting. . . .”) Show enthusiasm by explaining why you are interested in the job and demonstrate your initiative as well as your knowledge of the organization by relating your interest to some facet of the organization. (“Such an internship appeals to me because Abel's buyer training program impressed me as I researched the industry.”)

## Body

In the middle paragraphs, show through examples that you are qualified for the job. Limit each of these **paragraphs** to just one basic point that is clearly stated in the topic sentence. For example, your second paragraph might focus on work experience and your third paragraph on educational achievements. Do not just *tell* readers that you are qualified—*show* them by including examples and details. (“I helped design an upgrade of the CGI logo for Paramount Pictures and was formally commended by the Director of Marketing.”) Highlight your achievements and refer to your enclosed résumé, but do not simply summarize your résumé. Indicate how your talents can make valuable contributions to the company.

From: Marsha S. Parker <msparkar@ubi.edu>  
To: Patrice C. Crandal <pcrandal@abel.com>  
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:47 AM  
Subject: Application for Summer Internship  
Attachment:  Parker\_Resume.doc

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Dear Ms. Crandal:

I have learned from your Web site that you are hiring undergraduates for summer internships. Such an internship appeals to me because Abel's buyer training program impressed me as I researched the industry.

The professional and analytical qualities that my attached résumé describes match the job description on your Web site. My experience with the Alumni Relations Program and the University Center Committee have enhanced my communication and persuasive abilities as well as my understanding of compromise and negotiation. For example, in the alumni program, I persuaded both uninvolved and active alumni to become more engaged with the direction of the university. On the University Center Committee, I balanced the students' demands with the financial and structural constraints of the administration. With these skills, I can ably assist the members of your department with their summer projects and successfully juggle multiple responsibilities.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss your summer internship further. If you have questions or would like to speak with me, please contact me at (412) 863-2289 any weekday after 3 p.m., or you can e-mail me at <msparkar@ubi.edu>. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marsha S. Parker

FIGURE A-8. Application Letter Sent as E-mail (College Student Applying for an Internship)

222 Morewood Ave.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212  
April 16, 2009

Ms. Judith Castro, Director  
Human Resources  
Natural History Museum  
1201 S. Figueroa Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Dear Ms. Castro:

I have recently learned from Jodi Hammel, a graphic designer at Dyer/Khan, that you are recruiting for a graphic designer in your Marketing Department. Your position interests me greatly because it offers me an opportunity both to fulfill my career goals and to promote the work of an internationally respected institution. Having participated in substantial volunteer activities at a local public museum, I am aware of the importance of your work.

I bring strong up-to-date academic and practical skills in multimedia tools and graphic arts production, as indicated in my enclosed résumé. Further, I have recent project management experience at Dyer/Khan, where I was responsible for the development of client brochures, newsletters, and posters. As project manager, I coordinated the project time lines, budgets, and production with clients, staff, and vendors.

My experience and contacts in the Los Angeles area media and entertainment community should help me make use of state-of-the-art design expertise. As you will see on my résumé, I have worked with the leading motion picture, television, and music companies—that experience should help me develop exciting marketing tools Museum visitors and patrons will find attractive. For example, I helped design an upgrade of the CGI logo for Paramount Pictures and was formally commended by the Director of Marketing.

Could we schedule a meeting at your convenience to discuss this position further? Call me any weekday morning at 412-555-1212 (cell) or e-mail me at <jgoodman@aol.com> if you have questions or need additional information. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Joshua S. Goodman*

Joshua S. Goodman

Enclosure: Résumé

FIGURE A–9. Application Letter (Recent Graduate Applying for a Graphic Design Job)

Dear Ms. Smathers:

During the recent NOMAD convention in Washington, Karen Jarrett, Director of Operations, informed me of a possible opening at Aerospace Technologies for a manager of new product development. My extensive background in engineering exhibit design and management makes me an ideal candidate for the position she described.

I have been manager of the Exhibit Design Lab at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base for the past seven years. During that time, I received two Congressional Commendations for models of a space station laboratory and a docking/repair port. My experience in advanced exhibit design would give me a special advantage in helping develop AT's wind tunnel and aerospace models. Further, I have just learned this week that my exhibit design presented at NOMAD received a "Best of Show" Award.

As described on the enclosed résumé, I not only have workplace management experience but also have recently received an MBA from the University of Dayton. As a student in the MBA program, I won the Luson Scholarship to complete my coursework as well as the Jonas Outstanding Student Award.

I would be happy to discuss my qualifications in an interview at your convenience. Please telephone me at (937) 255-4137 or e-mail me at <mand@juno.com>. I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Robert Mandillo

FIGURE A-10. Application Letter (Applicant with Years of Experience)

## Closing

In the final paragraph, request an interview. Let the reader know how to reach you by including your phone number or e-mail address. End with a statement of goodwill, even if only a "thank you."

Proofread your letter *carefully*. Research indicates that if employers notice even one spelling, grammatical, or mechanical error, they often eliminate candidates from consideration immediately. Such errors give employers the impression that you lack writing skills or that you are careless in the way you present yourself professionally. See also **proof-reading**.