

The Secret to Writing Eye-Catching Cover Letters

By Beverley Neil, **CRW, CERW**

While the resume could be regarded as the Sales and Marketing Manager, the cover letter is the Director of First Impressions. If the Director of First Impressions does not do a stunning job, the resume may never have the opportunity to capture that interview.

Cover letters have long passed being the formal, and usually dull, documents to precede the resume and simply confirming which role is being applied for. Cover letters now need to stand out in their own right, to capture attention in a powerful way and drive home the all important capture of that interview.

The cover letter must demonstrate the applicant has a good understanding of the role as advertised, ways in which the job criteria are met, and give clear insight into the applicant's personality and work ethos.

Just as when writing the resume the most vital information needs to be right up there in the top third of the first page, so to with the cover letter it is critical to ensure there is solid evidence in the first paragraph that addresses the employer's job description, whether that be for certain skills, experience, qualifications and/or knowledge.

Make the Text Fresh and Eye-Catching

But there is no reason why this information has to be stated in a bland and uninteresting format. Faced with a mountain of applications, a new and exciting approach will come as a memorable breath of fresh air.

Consider some of these cover letter beginnings:

It's true! I consistently undertake roles in which I have little to no experience and consistently succeed beyond all expectations. In fact I seem to have made rather a habit of it: In November, 2005, I commenced work at the Portside Hospital Private Pharmacy where I have gone on to be the only staff member retained, and that in order to train all incoming staff. Perhaps this was due to my direct input into increasing productivity by 75%.

Or this example:

~~ Consistently Achieve Top Ten out of 350 Nation Wide ~~
~~ 2005 Training Coach of the Year Nominee ~~

To achieve these results there can only be one reason, a consuming passion for personal training! Working within the health industry and with individuals to sell, promote and educate on a product or program that is beneficial, this has been my lifeblood.

This example:

The reward of seeing a person grow and create positive changes with my support is the most privileged feeling I have ever experienced.

Throughout my diverse career spanning 16 years, I have consistently been moving towards this point where I can effectively combine critical life skills, innate interpersonal and counseling expertise and excellent academic qualifications to make a critical difference within my chosen field of human services.

Or this example:

Re: Opening For Business Services Manager

Even after more than 10 years as a top performing Business Services Manager assisting high-income individuals and major business enterprises within diversified industries, I am still passionate about the delivery of outcomes which enhance my current firm's, and our client's, bottom line.

The important point is not to over do it. Do not try to be funny, humor is far too diverse, do not be crass or controversial, and always be absolutely honest about achievements, skills, education, and attitudes.

Power Home with an Enthusiastic Finish

It is critical not to let the cover letter dwindle to a dull finish, but rather to bring in a strong sales message at the end, one that will lead effectively into the resume.

Consider this finish:

I believe in really listening and showing the customer respect, finding that this always brings its own rewards in trust, open communication, and increased sales. I have also always believed in hard work, loyalty and consistently working to the highest standards of professionalism. I am confident that these innate belief systems, in conjunction with my ability to rapidly assimilate new information and techniques, position me as an ideal candidate for your advertised role of Personal Trainer.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I earnestly hope we meet soon to discuss this exciting opportunity.

Or this example:

Do you believe a personal meeting would be mutually beneficial? I do. I am a passionate, highly skilled, and hardworking professional with a proven record of success that speaks volumes. I am confident I will rapidly become an asset to your organization and believe a personal meeting will be highly beneficial to both parties.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Or this:

I earnestly hope we will meet soon to discuss this exciting opportunity, and to demonstrate to you the full level of my tenacity, drive and commitment to succeed within the role of Pharmaceutical Sales Representative, a success that will also result in increased revenue for your clients company. I thank you for your time and consideration.

For cover letters that really perform it is vital to capture the reader's interest from the start, clearly list how the job requirements are met, often by using three or four concise bullet points, then always finish off with a strong, and courteous, sales message.

About The Author:

Beverley Neil, owner of d'Scriptive Words, carries a passion for teaching others how to write powerful resumes. She has dual international résumé writer accreditation, is a multiple award winning résumé writer and author of the Online Resume Writer's Course, suitable for both beginners who want to learn professional resume writing and professionals who want to improve their skills, and also the DIY Resume Writing Course for Job Seekers. For more information visit www.onlineresumewriterscourse.com