

# CAREER DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES L.L.C.

## EXECUTIVE CAREER MANAGEMENT

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## 4 Varieties Of Cover Letters: Each For A different Job Search Track

There are four basic variations of your cover letter. Depending on your job search strategy you might need two or more cover letter varieties. For a moment, let's pause and examine a helpful analogy: the turkey sandwich. Now, you can serve it on rye, whole wheat, or white bread ... or even a club roll and your condiment choice offers additional variety. But the "meat" of the sandwich stays the same. Your basic sales message (the meat) won't change much. However, your introduction and closing (top and bottom slices of bread) will need to be custom tailored for the situation. In my analogy, the turkey sandwich is still a turkey sandwich; no matter what kind of bread or roll it is served on.

The "*meat*" of the sandwich (that is any version of your cover letter), of course, must demonstrate how your skills, expertise, and experience are an ideal match for the prospective employer's needs. This is the part where you persuasively demonstrate that you are "***just what the doctor ordered.***" Keep in mind that any organization that is in a hiring mode has a problem. It could be a 'good problem' i.e., business is booming and we don't have enough people to keep up with it; the firm just landed a new contract and needs to staff a new department, etc. Or, it could be a 'bad' problem such as: the last person in this position resigned, or was terminated, or was promoted ... and we need to quickly fill that position. This is the section where you have the opportunity to 'pre-convince' the hiring authority that ***you can either solve or prevent their problem*** and therefore ***merit an invitation for a personal interview.***

The most common use of a cover letter is for **responding to a classified or "help wanted" ad** or announced/posted job vacancy. In your introductory paragraph (*one of the outside parts of the sandwich*) you will need to reference the position that you are applying for and where you learned of the company's need for your qualifications. This answers the employer's implicit question .... "*Why are you contacting me?*" The closing paragraph should reference how your skills mix is a great match for their stated needs, which could be demonstrated most effectively during a personal interview. Don't forget to '*ask for the interview*'.

Another COVER LETTER variety is used when **contacting companies that haven't actually (or yet) announced a job vacancy** so you can't say that you are applying for the (*fill in your next job title*) position as posted on LinkedIn or advertised in the Sunday paper. This type of letter is useful in two somewhat different situations. The first is when you have determined that a particular company is one that "*you've always wanted to work for*" and you are announcing your availability. The second is when you are doing a larger mailing to a targeted list companies who ***might*** benefit from someone with your particular qualifications. This variation is optimal when you are planning on relocating to a different geographic area and wish to connect with the relevant players for your field. Your opening and closing should be adapted appropriately.

Writing to professionals in the employment industry, **Recruiters, Headhunters, Executive Search Firms, and Employment Agencies** require a different approach. You have to bear in mind that these professionals, as nice and friendly as they may be, are not out there helping you find a job. They are never out there "*beating the brush*" in search of a job for you. Their allegiance is to their corporate client, the organization that *placed a job order with them*. If your background and qualifications look like a good match for the stated requirements, then the recruiter will be only too happy to present you as a candidate and receive a handsome commission should the client hire you. So your letter must reflect your ability to meet the recruiter's needs... which is to satisfy the corporate client. The closer your qualifications match

the hiring company's requirements, the "easier a sell" you will be for the recruiter and s/ he will be more inclined to present you as a candidate or finalist. Ask yourself if your résumé and cover letter package are truly presenting you as "just what the doctor ordered." Remember that you are not asking the recruiter for a job (unless you want to work in a recruiting firm). Make sure that your focus is on how your expertise and experience may be a match for the needs of one of the recruiter's clients.

The fourth derivative is appropriate when you are **using a contact name as a "bridge" into an organization**. This type of letter has the advantage of doing some "name dropping" and can indicate why this person, known to the organization, feels that you are an excellent match for the company and has therefore recommended that you contact them.

If you feel that you're *not* up to the task of adapting different versions and could benefit from proven professional help, see how Career Development Resources can put our expertise and 35+ years of experience to the task of helping you aggressively communicate your value in order to turbocharge your career advancement campaign by contacting us at: [cardevres1@gmail.com](mailto:cardevres1@gmail.com) or calling us at: 1+(914) 962-1548

Mark Berkowitz is the owner and President of Career Development Resources, LLC. Changing lives and revolutionizing careers since 1985, Mark provides one-on-one career consulting services, résumé building assistance and guidance to help each client achieve not only job advancement, but lasting and meaningful success in their career path as well. A distinguished figure in his field, Berkowitz is one of the top career builders in the country and has been quoted in dozens of books and publications on the topic of career advancement.

Passionate about empowering others to realize their dreams, Mark served as an executive board member of the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches. He has been helping clients successfully advance in and/or change their careers for over 36 years. With a Master's Degree in Career Development and **four specialized certifications** (National Certified Career Counselor, Certified Professional Résumé Writer, Int'l Certified Job & Career Transition Coach, and Certified Employment Interview Professional), he is **uniquely qualified to help you improve your career situation**. A recognized expert in the field, he had not only taught in Graduate Schools and led workshops and seminars, but also trained other counselors. Mark served as chairman of the Certification Board for the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches and was a founding member of the Career Management Alliance (fkn Career Masters Institute). Additionally, he has shared his expertise in effectively utilizing career assessment tools with graduate counseling students from nearby Fordham University, helping to prepare them for their future counseling careers.