

Writing Cover Letters

John R. Susko
IBM Development Manager (Retired)

Placement Agency

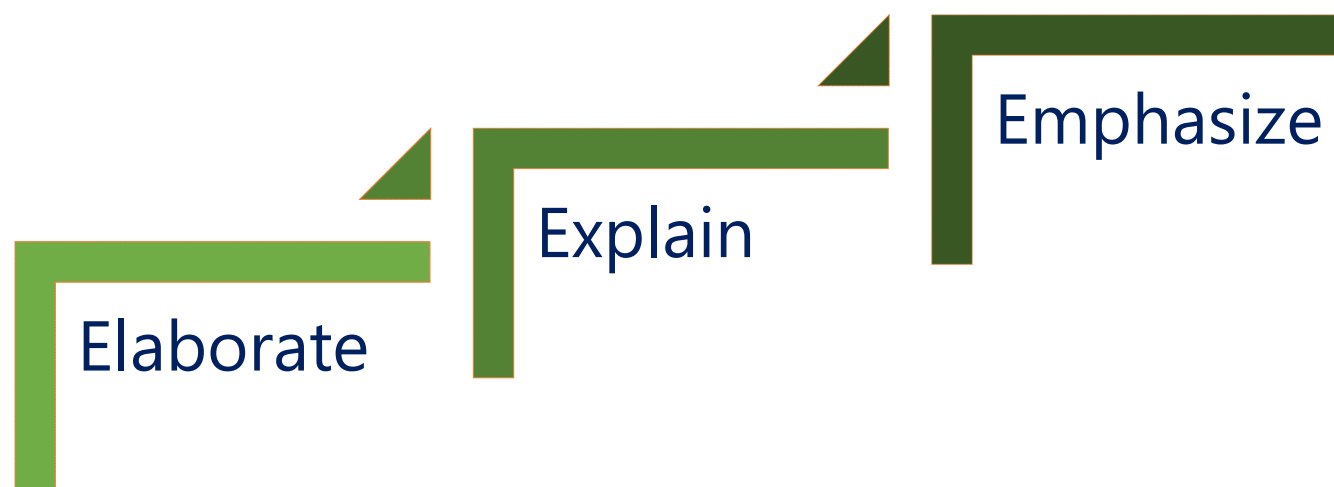
- 100K Sales Mgr. mailed 448 ltrs., 5 calls
- 70K Consultant mailed 1,225 ltrs., 8 calls
- 60K Exec mailed 1,500 ltrs., 30+ calls
- Branch Mgr. mailed 1,700 ltrs., 13 calls

New York Times ad 10/15/95



The Electrochemical Society
Advancing solid state & electrochemical science & technology

Advantages of Resume + Cover Letter



The Basics

- Address it to the right individual
- ***State:***
 - Why you want to work for this company
 - Why the company should hire you
 - Specific personal accomplishments



Beginnings and Endings

- ***First Sentence***
 - What brought you to this person
- ***Last Paragraph***
 - Specify a future action



The Body

- ***Turn resume items into short stories***
 - Pick an item from your resume
 - Expand on it
 - Personalize it
- ***Limit the number of examples cited***
- ***Select examples that show team skills***
- ***Note benefits of your accomplishments***



The Look

- *Business letter format (typed)*
- *Paper quality*
- *Print quality*
- *Length*
 - One page
 - Don't cheat on font size



Tone & Style



Be business-like, not cute



Ask for an interview



Check spelling and grammar



Don't waste words on the obvious



Have it reviewed by a "non-engineer"



The Electrochemical Society
Advancing solid state & electrochemical science & technology

Some Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Over using the word “I”
- Run-on sentences and paragraphs
- Not saying enough
- “Overly creative” use of desktop publishing
- Stilted language



Sample Form for Cover Letter

(Your complete address)

(Date)

The Employer/Representative's Name and Title

The Organization's Name

The Address of Organization

City, State, Zip Code

Dear (Representative's Name):

Paragraph I: Purpose of the letter – state the type of position or inquire as to positions in which you are interested and that you are enclosing a resume for his/her review.

Paragraph II: State the reasons why you have an interest in this particular organization and point out significant experience or accomplishments in your field which make you a desirable employee for that organization, company, school, etc.

Paragraph III: Restate your interest in the organization. Inform the addressee that you are interested in having a personal interview and will contact the office (or the appropriate person) in a week to schedule an appointment. Thank the employer for his/her consideration and interest.

Yours truly,

(Penwritten signature here)

(Your name typed here)

Enclosure



The Electrochemical Society
Advancing solid state & electrochemical science & technology

A Weak Letter

Dear Sir/Madam:

With this letter, I would like to inquire into a research or engineering opportunity at your company. Enclosed you will see a copy of my resume.

I am currently a research associate at Clarkson University. My area of specialization is chemical process optimization, simulation, and chemical equipment design, etc.

I would like the opportunity to present my work and discuss my qualifications for positions available. Please feel free to contact me at 908-----.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.



The Electrochemical Society
Advancing solid state & electrochemical science & technology