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From the *New York Times* bestselling career author

*Martin Yate's*  
**KNOCK  
EM  
DEAD**

**JOB SEARCH  
LETTER  
TEMPLATES**

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Killer Advice For Every Job Search Letter, 125+ Templates  
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Five types of cover letter, networking, follow-up, negotiation, acceptance, rejection, resignation, resurrection & thank you letters

## About Martin Yate, CPC

New York Times bestseller Martin Yate is the author of *Knock Em Dead - The Ultimate Job Search Guide*, now going into its 27<sup>th</sup> edition. It is the keystone of a 14 book series, with each book addressing a different aspect of job search and modern career management. Collectively published in some 63 foreign language editions, the *Knock Em Dead* way is unique in its scope and global acceptance in industrialized nations.

With new books and editions added constantly over the last twenty-five years, Mr. Yate's body of work has gradually evolved into a carefully integrated strategy for navigating the twists and turns of a half-century worklife. The *Knock Em Dead* philosophy offers a practical methodology for achieving professional success, personal fulfillment and financial stability in an uncertain world.

He has been in career management for thirty-five year years, including success as an international technology headhunter, as Director of Human Resources for the technology division of a public company in Silicon Valley, and as Director of Training and Development for a multi-national employment services company.

He has spent twenty-five years on the international lecture circuit coaching corporate recruiters, headhunters, hiring managers, job hunters, career coaches and resume writers on four continents. This is a travel schedule that he is thankfully retiring, thanks to the wonders of webcasts and distance learning technology.

Martin has devoted his life to learning what it takes to achieve a successful professional life. Yet despite encyclopedic knowledge, success and public acclaim, you'll find Martin to be warm, witty and someone who genuinely cares about helping you gain control of your career and change the trajectory of your life. He is considered by many to be the world's thought leader on career management and job search issues.

*Martin Yate CPC*



"The best book on job hunting."



"Some great advice can be found in Martin Yate's *Knock 'em Dead...*"



"Comprehensive, fast-paced, upbeat style"



"One of the most admired authors in the career space."



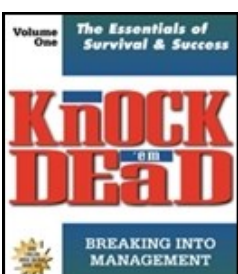
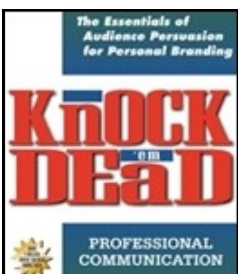
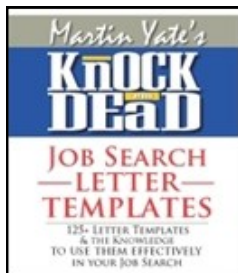
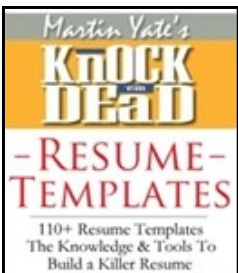
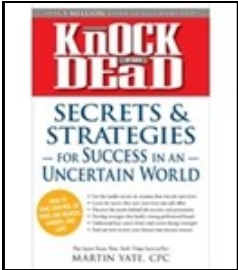
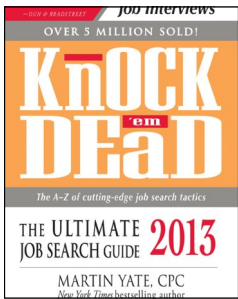
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"The first, middle, and last word for job seekers..."



# KNOCK 'EM DEAD JOB SEARCH LETTER TEMPLATES



*Great letter techniques and samples for every step of your job search*

**Martin Yate, CPC**

*New York Times* bestselling author



Savannah, Georgia

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In twenty five years of publication around the world, the Knock 'em Dead books owe their  
success to millions of readers like you, who are helped and then help spread the word. It is a  
privilege to help another in a time of need, and I sincerely hope that I can help you.

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competent professional person should be sought.

—From a *Declaration of Principles* jointly adopted by a Committee of the  
American Bar Association and a Committee of Publishers and Associations

## **Where Are My Job Letter Templates?**

As usual, Knock 'Em Dead leads the pack when it comes to resumes, job search, career planning etc., and the same is true when it comes to eBooks.

*Knock 'Em Dead Job Search Letter Templates* comes enriched with audio and with **over 125 MS Word letter templates** ready-to-use. To be frank, it is the most technologically advanced job search letter book ever published.

Unfortunately, not all e-book sellers as they exist today are ready to embrace an e-book so enriched. Most are currently only capable of delivering the PDF portion of the package and don't accommodate the folder containing the hundreds of letter templates included in your package.

Each *Knock 'Em Dead Job Search Letter Templates* e-book comes with its own personalized code that will allow you to download your templates immediately and at no cost.

To access the MS Word cover letter and job search letter templates that come with Knock 'Em Dead Job Search Letter Templates, [click here](#) or go to <http://www.knockemdead.com/LetterTemplates> and use the password **Martin\_Yate\_Templates**. If you have to access the Internet through another device in order to download your MS Word resume templates, be sure to type both the URL and the password exactly as they appear on this page.

## **Praise from Job Seekers for the Knock 'em Dead Books**

**I have averaged at least an interview per day for the last couple weeks.** After a long period (two months) of very sporadic interview activity, bought the *Knock 'em Dead Letter* and *Resume* books! I have averaged at least an interview per day for the last couple weeks. Some of this might be plain good luck, but I think revising my resume and cover letters several weeks ago had a positive effect.

—L.E. (no location given)

**I think he called me as soon as he put the letter down.** I brought all three of your books. *Knock 'em Dead Resumes, Letters, and Knock 'em Dead The Ultimate Job Search Guide*. I read each book cover to cover. I went for the interview yesterday with a mental health center. They said they would call me by the end of the week. Soon as I got home I wrote a thank you follow - up letter and went to the post office and mailed it express to get there by Tuesday. I got the call from the hiring manager within the hour letting me know that I have the job. I think he called me as soon as her put the letter down.

—K.G.

**BRAVO >>>> Well done maestro!!!** Excellent book it showed me all I needed to write the perfect cover letter and it was incredibly easy to read and showed excellent examples of all different types of job seeking situations. I highly recommend this to anyone...from professionals to those seeking part-time employment, well done Mr. Yate!

—Anonymous, Amazon review

**Thank you for changing our lives.** After I sent my new resume and cover letter, I got four interviews in one week, and refused two interviews. I want to say Thank you, thank you for doing this for millions of professionals who work hard, and thank you for changing our lives —job seeking is life, it is for everyone who takes their life seriously.

—N.P., Chicago IL

**It took me one time with your books:** I re-wrote my resume for a specific job description. I got the call for an interview, I went for the interview, I sent the follow-up letter and I got the job. I learned all these techniques for getting you through each phase and I listened and followed all the directions in each of your *Knock 'em Dead* books. These are the best self-help tips I ever got out of a book.

—K.Y., email

**We are huge fans of your Knock 'em Dead books** and recommend them to everyone we know in the market for a new Job. It helped my husband so much, he had 5 offers to consider in his search.

—The Costas, Hollywood, FL

**Maybe it was just a coincidence,** but the first job I wrote a cover letter for using this book is the first one that called me for an interview, and ultimately hired me for [...] I really think you should give it a try!

—SH, Virginia

**Very useful,** everyone looking for a job should know how to write a good cover letter—this will provide the guidance.

—Anonymous, Amazon review

**Knock 'em Dead Letters really opened my eyes.** I have now begun to dig into *Knock 'em Dead The Ultimate Job Search Guide*. I am a person who likes to have a proactive plan of attack when I embark on an endeavor and your books are proving to be a helpful guide.

—H.F., Florissant, MO

**By adopting your methods, I got 4 job offers and had a hard time deciding!** I am very grateful for your *Knock 'em Dead* series. I have read the trio and adopted the methods. In the end, I get a dream job with a salary that is almost double of my previous! By adopting your methods, I got 4 job offers and had a hard time deciding! It will be good if you can include more on dealing with multi-job offers.

—C.Y., Singapore

**It's a fabulous resource!** Just a note that I recommend *Knock 'em Dead Letters* to EVERYONE! It's a fabulous resource!

—B.H., Atlanta, GA

**From a premier career coach.** You're a godsend ... truly. It's amazing, I might "know" the answers, but when it's us, it's so different! We're stressed, tired, and wondering what in the world to do next. Your guidance is much appreciated and always works.... we're leaving in the morning for a site visit and "renegotiation" of points... you really help to cut through to what's what.

—Identity withheld by request

**You need this book** I used this book when I was job searching during my senior year of college. I read it cover to cover, and followed the author's advice. I was highly successful in my job search, landing my dream job. I was even complimented several times on my "very creative" cover letter. You can't go wrong with this book!

—Anonymous, Amazon review

**Thanks from the bottom of my heart; your methods really work.** Message: Thanks Martin, I got the job! I used your techniques in *Knock 'em Dead Letters*, particularly the two column comparison format and sending copies to everyone involved: the HR Manager and Executive Director, who didn't respond and the Artistic Director, who the position reports to and he did respond! He called, interviewed me and offered the job. He loved the format and that I contacted him directly. I am now using your technique to help family members secure new positions. Thanks from the bottom of my heart; your methods really work. I'm proof of that!

—J.H., NYC

**Your advice and resources are fantastic.**

Just went through a downsizing and it was the best experience of a bad situation. Your [*Knock 'em Dead*] books helped me get a job 10 years ago and they helped me again. Your advice and resources are fantastic.

—K.J., Jacksonville, FL

**I cannot tell you what a fabulous response I have been getting** due to the techniques you describe in your books. Besides giving me the tools I needed to 'get my foot in the door,' they gave me confidence. I never thought I could secure an excellent position within a month!

—B.G., Mountain View, CA

**Thanks for making me look like a genius!**

Have used your books successfully for many years. Thanks for making me look like a genius! I am a HUGE fan.

—Email, no name or location given

***Knock 'em Dead* really says it all.** I used your book, and landed a job that was over double the salary of my previous job, on the same day as I interviewed which is very, very rare in a state job. *Knock 'em Dead* really says it all. I was able to negotiate to the absolute top end of the starting pay (because) of my resume, cover letter and interview and the chapter on salary negotiations. Your books were extremely helpful in presenting the best part of me.

—S.J., Kansas

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## Read This First

*Selling yourself with the written word is always a challenge. And with everything you have to stay on top of in your professional life, packaging yourself in job search letters is probably one thing you haven't made a priority.*

**B**ut, the writing skills displayed in your letters and resumes can have a *major* impact on your job search. Ignore developing these critical skills and you can stay longer in that going-nowhere job, or longer unemployed.

*Knock 'em Dead Cover Letters* has helped millions of people around the world craft hard-hitting job search letters of all types that helped them land interviews, advanced their candidacy and won job offers. It can do the same for you. Use these techniques and your letters will position you as someone worth taking seriously.

You'll find job search letters of every conceivable type here: from cover letters, through follow-up after telephone and face-to-face meeting letters, networking, resurrection, acceptance and rejection letters, to those oh-so-satisfying letters of resignation.

These letters work, giving you an edge in a highly competitive job market. They are *real* letters that have already worked in someone's job search. Some of these letters I've helped write, others have been sent to me by career coaches, professional resume writers, headhunters, hiring managers, and grateful readers. They will work for you too, when you customize them to your own unique circumstances and your voice.



#### Note

Throughout this book the words “mail,” “letter,” and “email,” are intended to be interchangeable, unless otherwise noted. Written communications can be delivered by either email or traditional mail, with the majority going by email. However, I don't want you to ignore traditional mail, because when you do something other job hunters aren't doing, you stand out.

What do I mean by “your voice”? I mean that as you learn to customize and create your own letters, they will work best when the tone of the letter sounds natural, but while staying away from words you wouldn't normally use in a professional context.

## How Recruitment Works

A good cover letter, and subsequent follow-up letters, can speed your candidacy through the four stages all employers go through in the recruitment screening and selection cycle. They won't win you the job in and of themselves, but they can make a big difference in the way you are perceived as a professional and as a person, thus differentiating you from the competition. The four stages are:

1. *Long-list development.* The largest manageable list of qualified candidates, usually ten to twelve.
2. *Short-list development.* The long list of candidates is screened for best-fit-to-the-job, reducing the long list to four or six candidates.

Those who make the cut become the “short list” and are invited in for an interview, after first passing the additional screening of a telephone interview. A dossier is created for each candidate, including both print and electronic documents.

3. *Short-list prioritization.* Through a series of interviews, usually one, two, or three, the short list candidates are steadily ranked for ability and fit.
4. *Short-list review and decision.* Each candidate’s dossier is reviewed one last time before the final decision. The dossier will include your resume, the employer’s notes, and any cover and follow-up letters you have been smart enough to send during the interview process. These letters make additional points, clear up mistakes and omissions, and serve to brand you as a competent professional and real human being who would be a pleasure to work with. Your letters always cut to the chase; they don’t waste time, they are friendly and respectful; they are not pompous, distant or death-in-the-family formal.

In each of these steps, letters have a role to play in separating you from other candidates (part of a process called professional branding that we’ll discuss later) and easing your passage through each step of the selection cycle. Letters support your candidacy and remind employers of your relevant skills, professionalism, continued existence, interest and suitability for the job, all the way through to the offer.

Job search professionals know that when there is no major difference between two top candidates, the offer will always go to the most enthusiastic; your follow-up letters after meetings help make that enthusiasm clear to your prospective employer.

Passing through each step of the interview cycle, you are presented with significant opportunities to advance your candidacy. You can add additional information after a meeting, clear up a misunderstanding or a poor answer (“I’m good at my job, but not so good at interviews, just haven’t had that many. When we were talking about \_\_\_\_\_, perhaps I didn’t make it clear that...”).

By sampling a phrase from this letter and few words from that letter, you will create unique letters that reflect the real you.

Because your comments are in a letter, it speaks for you when you aren't there to speak for yourself; a strong written dimension to your job search can double your effectiveness. The different types of letters you create to advance your candidacy during the interview cycle demonstrate your writing skills, attention to detail, professionalism, and that all-important enthusiasm. Each letter adds another meaningful dimension to your candidacy.

With *Knock 'em Dead Cover Letters* on your desk, you won't waste time creating letters from scratch, and once settled in a new position, you can apply these same strategies and tactics to the written communications that are an integral part of every successful career.

# 1

## Cover Letters: The Secret Weapon of Your Job Search

*Letters can play a critical role in a successful job search, they are far too often overlooked or under-utilized.*

**W**hen you build a great resume but don't learn how to use it properly, your job search will take longer and the job you get may not be the best your skills deserve. You can use cover letters even when you don't have a contact, but, if you develop a plan of attack that includes reaching out directly to hiring authorities, you'll get more interviews more quickly. Whenever someone in a position to hire you reviews your resume, the odds of getting that interview increase dramatically, because you have skipped right over getting pulled from the resume database, sidestepped the recruiter's evaluation process and you are pitching directly to the hiring authority.

The primary goal of every job search is to get into conversations, as quickly and frequently as

possible, with people in a position to hire you: without conversations, job offers can't be made. Rarely reaching hiring authorities with your message is one of the major reasons why many job searches stall out. This stall-out happens because most job searches occupy themselves, almost exclusively, with posting resumes to resume banks and responding to job postings by uploading resumes into other resume databases.

However, when you can get your resume, personalized with a cover letter, in front of hiring authorities, you differentiate yourself. And by differentiating your message and your brand you dramatically increase your chances of landing an interview. Differentiating your initial contacts helps differentiate your candidacy.

If all you are planning to do is load your resume into resume databases, a cover letter can always help, but its main strength is in personalizing your message to a specific company and ideally to a specific person. When you develop a plan of attack for your job search that includes reaching out directly to decision makers, the personalizing touch of a letter really increases your bang.

## Who to Target in Your Job Search

The hiring titles to target during your job search are:

- Those titles mostly likely to be in a position to hire you. Usually these will be managers one to three levels above your target job.
- Those titles most likely to be involved in the selection process. Usually these will be managers working in related departments.

When an email or envelope is opened, your cover letter should be the first thing seen. A cover letter personalizes your candidacy for a specific job in ways your resume can't, given its formal nature and structure. The cover letter sets the stage for the reader to accept your resume, and therefore you, as something and someone special; it creates a context in which your resume is then read. It can create common ground between you and the reader, and demonstrate that you are well qualified and suitable for this job with this company.

Your ideal target for direct communication is always someone who can hire you, although any management title offers opportunity for referral. Even HR contacts are valuable: they can't make the hiring decision, but the pivotal nature of their job means HR professionals are aware of all areas within a company that could use your skills.

Any name and title you capture in a job search is valuable. With the Internet at your fingertips there are countless ways to identify the names of people who hold the titles you need to reach, and if a name and title is of no use to you, it might be just the contact another job hunter needs, so it can be a valuable commodity to leverage in your networking activities. There is a whole chapter on how to find the names of hiring authorities later in the book.

## **Five Tactics That Help Your Cover Letter Work**

### **Address Your Target by Name**

Your first step is to grab the reader's attention and arouse interest, so whenever possible address the letter to someone by name.

Approaching hiring authorities directly is one of the very best tactics for getting job offers, because, as I noted, it cuts out many of the recruitment screening steps: the resume, databases, the external recruiter (headhunter) review, and the internal recruiter review (HR recruiter). Right now, just get it fixed in your mind that names are a powerful secret weapon in your job search. Whenever you can find the names of any one of these titles involved in the recruitment and selection cycle, approach them directly and address them by name.

### **Make Your Letter Readable**

Your customer, the reader, is always going to be distracted, so your letters need to be easily readable, focused, clear, and brief. You can also grab the reader's attention with the appearance of

your letter, which should echo the fonts and font sizes of your resume, giving you a more professional look.

The font and font size are important concerns because they must be legible to hiring managers. Anyone who has been staring at computer screens for ten or more years and has ten other priorities pressing for attention is likely to have problems with tiny font sizes and elaborate but unreadable type faces. I recommend a minimum of 11- or 12-point font size. Remember to apply these rules of matching font and font size to *email and print* letters, it is easy to do and yet so often overlooked.

## Emphasize Your Personal Brand

Branding is the process by which you consistently draw attention to the ways you are special, these special attributes makes you unique and define your brand against your competitors. The cover letter is part of the packaging that captures the professional you. If it looks good, carries a succinct, relevant, readily accessible message and shows you to be a professional with a clear sense of self, you're well on the road to establishing a viable professional brand. When your actions differentiate you from others, your standing as a candidate is improved.

What makes you special?

- Getting your resume directly under the nose of a manager, who just wants to make a good hire and get back to work, makes you special.
- Getting your resume to the hiring manager in a creative way and showing that you know what you are doing makes you special. Your letter might say in part, "I sent my resume by email but thought you might appreciate a screen break, so you'll find it attached to this letter..."

Your email might also note, "As well as attaching my resume to this email, in case you need a screen break I've also sent it by traditional mail."

- Writing a strong cover letter that presents your resume and establishes connectivity between you and the manager makes you special.
- Keeping your message clear and succinct makes you special.
- Following up your meetings with thoughtful letters that continue the messaging of a consummate professional makes you special and confirms your professional brand.
- Making sure in all your letters and resumes that your paper is good quality and that the fonts are legible and coordinated makes you special.
- Making sure that in all your emails the fonts are legible and coordinated with your resume makes you special.



**Note**

We address the issue of creating a professional brand in this book as it applies to written communication in letters. This theme is followed throughout *Knock em Dead 2011*, *The Ultimate Job Search Guide* and *Knock em Dead Resume & Templates*.

Good brands are those that live up to their promise, or value proposition: “this is what you get when you hire me.” Integrate this brand-building behavior with the other strategies discussed and your candidacy is going to get more attention. To emphasize the consistency of your personal brand:

1. Use the same font choices and paper for your letters as you use for your resume.
2. Make the font you employ for contact information and the headlines you use the same in both your resume and your letterhead.
3. Use the same font you chose for your resume’s body copy for the message in your letter.
4. Use the same font choices for all your email communications. Smart idea: set the chosen font as your default email font.
5. Get matching paper for resume, cover letters, and envelopes. Every office superstore has them. You need printed resumes to take to interviews aside from any cover letters and

resume you want to send by traditional mail when the opportunity arises (a great way to get your resume read since most job hunters don't think to do it). This means that hiring managers get far fewer resumes by mail, and since busy managers like an (increasingly rare) break from the computer screen, more time is spent reviewing your resume.

## Cut To the Chase and Stay On-Message

A good cover letter gets your resume read with serious consideration. Time is precious, which means recruiters and hiring authorities won't waste it on a letter that wanders. Your letters should always reflect a professional whose resume will have something to say.

When you can, make a specific reference to a job's key requirements. You want to allow the reader to move from your letter to the resume thinking, "here's a candidate who can do this job"; referencing a job's most important requirements does just that.

Remember, a cover letter's job is to particularize your pitch to a specific company or hiring authority. If an advertisement, a job posting, or a telephone conversation with a potential employer reveals an aspect of a particular job opening that is not addressed in your resume (and for some reason you haven't had time to update it), use a cover letter to fill in the gaps; the Executive Briefing is an especially useful tool for this job (you'll see samples of this type of cover letter shortly). Remember: brevity is important. Leave your reader wanting more. The letter doesn't sell you—that's the resume's job. Rather, the letter positions you for serious consideration: it whets the reader's appetite, no more.

## End with a Call to Action

Just as you worked to create a strong opening, make sure your closing carries the same conviction. It is the reader's last personal impression of you, so make it strong, make it tight, and make it obvious that you are serious about entering into meaningful conversation. Your letters should always include a call to action. Explain when, where, and how you can be contacted. You

can also be proactive, telling the reader that you intend to follow up at a certain point in time if they have not contacted you.

Every step of the job search and selection cycle offers opportunities to use letters to leverage your candidacy. A good, strong letter will get your foot in the door, differentiate you from other contenders and ultimately help you define a distinctive professional brand. Although the majority of your communications will be emails, stand out by sending letters on really important topics as both emails and traditional letters. If nothing more, your important communication gets read twice, which increases the odds of your point being understood.

## 2

## Five High-Mileage Cover Letters

*Corporate America's wholesale adoption of the Internet as the primary recruitment vehicle has completely changed the way you need to approach your job search.*

**E**very year the number of resumes loaded into commercial resume databases grows exponentially. Currently the larger databases each house more than 36 million resumes. Many individual corporate resume banks have over 1 million resumes stored, and social networking sites like LinkedIn have over 70 million resume and professional profiles registered. This has made life easier for recruiters, since they can usually find enough qualified candidates in the top 20 resumes from any given database, and given the large number of potential candidates, they rarely dig deeper.

In resume databases that allow attachments to your resume, a cover letter helps you stand out by making additional and supportive comments about your capabilities. When you send your resume

directly to a potential hiring authority by using their name and title, your resume and cover letter have even greater impact because you can differentiate yourself by addressing the hiring manager or recruiter by name and by customizing your message.

Below are five types of cover letters that will deliver mileage during your job search. Each is a composite letter I built from scouring the examples that appear later in the book, taking a word from one example and a phrases from another (this can be a useful technique to quickly build your own unique letters). In each example, I have underlined the borrowed phrases to give you an idea of how easy it is to create your own original documents with a little cut and paste. The five letters are:

1. *The Generic Letter*. Used when you do not know of a specific job but have the name of a contact or you are uploading to a resume bank that allows attachments.
2. *The Executive Briefing*. Always effective when you have knowledge of the job's requirements and especially so when you can address someone by name.
3. *The Online Posting Letter*.
4. *The Headhunter Letter*.
5. *The Networking Letter*. Good for getting the word out to the professional community about your search.

## The Generic Letter

This letter is designed to be uploaded to a database as an attachment or sent to a potential hiring manager whose name you've garnered from your research. Of course, if you are sending this to an individual it should be personalized with a salutation at the very least, and will ideally include references to the company or the establishment of some common ground between you and recipient.

From: Your Name [Your e-mail address]

To: Recipient e-mail address

Cc:

Subject: Tech sales/key acct/closing/new territory dev/negotiation/customer service

---

Ref: Technical Sales Representative, listed on Monster.com

Dear Recipient Name:

With 3+ years in technical B-to-B sales. I have developed an expertise in new and key account acquisition, new territory development and management, contract negotiation, and customer service. **Ranked # 2 in my company** for new account acquisition for the year just ended, I am ready to make my first strategic career move. Such accounts include \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Familiar with blueprints, part number breakdowns, and the bidding process, I have **doubled my sales from \$40,000 to \$80,000 a month**. I am known for effectively identifying and resolving problems before they affect related areas, personnel, or customers.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you how I might make similar contributions to the success of [\_\_\_\_\_] Corporation. My resume is attached for your review; I believe you will find me well qualified.

I look forward to hearing from you to schedule a personal interview at your convenience.

Sincere regards,

Your Name

(555) 555-1234

Attachment: resume

# The Executive Briefing

The executive briefing is an effective cover letter to use *whenever you have information about a job opening* from an online job posting, a lead, or a prior conversation with one of your network contacts *and there is a good skill match*. The executive briefing gets right to the point and makes life easy for the reader. It introduces your resume, as well as customizing and supplementing it.

Why is an executive briefing so effective?

1. It quickly matches job requirements against the skills you bring to the table, making analysis much easier for the reader and a successful outcome more likely for you.
2. While an initial screener, someone who quickly sorts through cover letters and resumes to separate the wheat from the chaff, may not have an in-depth understanding of the job's requirements, the executive briefing matches the job's requirements, point-by-point to your abilities.
3. The executive briefing allows you emphasize your skills in a particular area or fill any gaps in your resume with job-specific information.
4. If an opportunity comes along that is a slam-dunk for you but your resume isn't up-to-date or doesn't have the right focus, the executive briefing allows you to bring that work history right up to date. What do you do when, having been asked for your resume and being forced to admit that it isn't up-to-date, a prospective employer asks to see it anyway? The executive briefing is a very professional quick fix for this kind of situation.

The executive briefing assures that each resume you send out addresses the job's specific needs. It provides a comprehensive picture of a thorough professional, plus a personalized, fast, and easy-to-read synopsis that details exactly how your background matches the job description.

From: Your Name [Your e-mail address]  
To: Recipient e-mail address  
Cc:  
Subject: **Assessment Coordinator** job posting

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Dear Recipient Name:

Your posting on the *New York Times* website, on June 9, for an **Assessment Coordinator** seems to perfectly match my background and experience. As the International Brand Coordinator for Kahlúa, I coordinated meetings, prepared presentations and materials, organized a major off-site conference, and supervised an assistant. I believe that I am an excellent candidate for this position as I have illustrated below:

**YOUR REQUIREMENTS**

A highly motivated, diplomatic, flexible, quality-driven professional on every project.

Exceptional organizational skills and attention to detail.

College degree and minimum 3 years relevant business experience.

Computer literacy.

**MY QUALIFICATIONS**

Successfully managed project teams involving different business units. The defined end results were achieved

Planned the development and launch of the Kahlúa Heritage Edition bottle series. My former manager enjoyed leaving the “details” and follow-through to me. Coverdale project management training.

B.A. from Vassar College. 5+ years business experience in productive, professional environments.

Extensive knowledge of Windows & Macintosh applications.

I’m interested in this position because it fits well with my new career focus in the human resources field. Currently, I am enrolled in NYU’s adult career planning and development certificate program and working at Lee Hecht Harrison.

My resume is attached for your review. If you believe that there is a match, as I do, please call me. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincere regards,

Your Name  
(555) 555-1234  
Administrator Healthcare

## The Online Posting Letter

If you are writing as a result of an online job posting, you should mention both the website and any reference codes associated with the job:

*“I read the job posting on your company’s website on January 5th and felt I had to respond...”*

*“Your online job posting regarding a \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ .com caught my eye, and your company name grabbed my attention.”*

*“This email, and my attached resume, is in response to your job posting on \_\_\_\_\_ .”*

From: Your Name [Your e-mail address]

To: Recipient e-mail address

Cc:

Subject: **Hydrogeologist/Groundwater Modeler: solute transport modeling, quantitative skills**

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**RE: Position of Hydrogeologist/Groundwater Modeler, Company Job ID: ACHZ4121-234059, AJB**

**Reference Number: 4950495, Job ID #0000BZ/BBBB**

Dear Recipient Name:

I learned about your need for a Hydrogeologist/Groundwater Modeler with great interest, as my qualifications match your requirements for this position almost exactly. Please accept my attached resume for your review and allow me to explain briefly how I can contribute to \_\_\_\_\_.

With an MS Degree in Hydrologic Sciences and over 7 years of research experience, I have developed a strong background in advanced theories of solute transport modeling; consequently, I have developed effective quantitative skills and a practical understanding of the fundamental principles and concepts associated with hydrogeology.

My resume will provide additional details regarding my educational background and professional experience. Beyond these qualifications, it may be helpful for you to know that I have worked successfully in both independent and team project environments, adapt readily to rapidly changing work conditions, and enjoy the prospect of contributing to CRPH's "80-year reputation as a water industry leader" in the advancement of hydrogeologic and groundwater projects.

I would welcome the opportunity to interview for this position and discuss the results you can expect from me as a member of your team. Thank you for your time and consideration.

My resume is attached for your review

Sincerely,

Your Name

(555) 555-1234

Attachment: resume

# The Headhunter Letter

Headhunters deserve your respect. They are, after all, the most sophisticated salespeople in the world—they alone sell products that talk back! A headhunter will be only faintly amused by your exhortations to “accept the challenge” or “test your skills by finding me a job” in the brief moment before she practices hoops with your letter and the trash can.

When approaching and working with headhunters—whether they are working for the local employment agency, a contingency, or a retained search firm—bear in mind these two rules and you won’t go far wrong:

1. Tell the truth. Answer questions truthfully and you will likely receive help. Get caught in a lie and you will have established a career-long distrust with someone who probably possesses a very diverse and influential list of contacts.
2. Cut immediately to the chase in your letters and conversation. For example:

*“I am forwarding my resume, because I understand you specialize in representing employers in the \_\_\_\_\_ field.”*

*“Please find the enclosed resume. As a specialist in the [RL] field, I felt you might be interested in the skills of a \_\_\_\_\_.”*

*“Among your many clients there may be one or two who are seeking a thorough professional for a position as a \_\_\_\_\_.”*

Remember that in a cover letter sent to executive search firms and employment agencies, you should mention your salary and, if appropriate, geographic considerations. If you are going to work with headhunters productively, read the latest edition of *Knock 'em Dead: The Ultimate Job Search Guide*.

Here is an example of a cover letter you might send to a corporate headhunter:

From: Your Name [Your e-mail address]

To: Recipient e-mail address

Cc:

Subject: Health Management Professional

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Dear Recipient Name,

With a 20+-year track record in the pharmaceutical industry, I believe that I have unique talents that could benefit one of your HMO clients. Some of the key capabilities that I could bring include:

- Design and implementation of health management programs. First-hand experience developing programs for asthma management, and directing programs that have delivered substantial savings to client firms.
- Managing the development and implementation of web-based services that are new revenue streams for my firm and value-added services to its physician customer base.
- Exceptional account relations skills. I currently call on and maintain business relationships with key client contacts at the highest levels.
- A broad understanding of the health care industry, which includes pharmaceutical sales and extensive interaction with health care professionals at all levels.
- National certifications from the University of Wisconsin in Quality Management and from the National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute.

I am confident that my knowledge and expertise would allow me to deliver successful results for one of your clients in the health care industry. I would enjoy speaking with you to explore potential client opportunities.

Please review my attached resume. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please call or e-mail me to arrange a convenient time for us to meet. As my employer is unaware of my job search, I trust that you will hold this correspondence in strict confidence and consult with me before releasing my materials to a prospective employer.

Your Name  
(555) 555-1234  
Attachment: resume

# Networking Letters

Nothing works like a personal recommendation from a fellow professional. It is no accident that successful people in all fields know each other; they helped each other become successful because they stayed in touch. You get the most out of networking by being connected to your profession and the professionals within it. You'll want to check out networking strategies in the latest edition of *Knock 'em Dead the Ultimate Job Search Guide*.

There are important considerations to bear in mind with networking letters:

1. Establish connectivity. Recall the last memorable contact you had, someone that both you and the contact have spoken to recently. Use past employers, membership in professional associations, common interests, or a topical event as a bridge builder.

If you are writing (and calling) as the result of a referral, say so and quote the person's name if appropriate:

*"I am writing because our mutual colleague, John Stanovich, felt my skills and abilities would be valuable to your company . . ."*

*"The manager of your San Francisco branch, Pamela Bronson, suggested I contact you regarding the opening for a \_\_\_\_\_."*

*"I received your name from Henry Charles, the branch manager of the Savannah Bank last week, and he suggested I contact you. In case the resume he forwarded is caught up in the mail, I've enclose another."*

*"Arthur Gold, your office manager and my neighbor, thought I should contact you about the upcoming opening in your accounting department."*

2. Tell them why you are writing:

*“It’s time for me to make a move; my job just got sent to Mumbai, India, and I’m hoping you could help me with a new sense of direction.”*

3. Do not talk about your ideal job. This only narrows the opportunities people will tell you about. Instead, just let contacts know your qualifications/experience and the job title you are most likely to work under. Don’t let ego cost you a valuable job lead.
4. Ask for advice and guidance:

*“Who do you think are the growing companies in the area today?”*

*“Could you take a look at my resume for me? I really need an objective opinion and I’ve always respected your viewpoint.”*

5. Never ask directly, “Do you have a job?” “Can you hire me?” or “Can your company hire me?” Instead, ask to talk on the telephone for a few minutes. Then by all means ask for leads within specific target companies.
6. When you do get help, say thank you. If you get the help in conversation, follow it up in writing: the impression is indelible and it just might get you another lead.

From: Your Name [Your e-mail address]

To: Recipient e-mail address

Cc:

Subject: **I bumped into Father O'Donald** at church

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Dear Recipient Name,

Talk about small coincidences. I bumped into Father \_\_\_\_\_ at church this past Sunday and learned that St. \_\_\_\_\_ is opening a new foster care division this coming March. One word led to another, and he told me that Little Lamb Foster Care & Adoptive Services is in desperate need of social workers and foster/adoptive care counselors to fill several positions.

You might not recall my name, but hopefully I can help you to remember our meeting. I participated in an interview with you in early May of 2010 for the position of Foster Care **Counselor with Little Lamb's** \_\_\_\_\_ facility.

We discussed my involvement with \_\_\_\_\_ Youth & Family Counseling Program at great length, and agreed I would be well suited for a similar position with Little Lamb as an Adoptive Care Counselor. Unfortunately, the lack of state and federal funding was reduced that month leaving you with no other choice but to put a freeze on hiring.

**As you can imagine, I am thrilled to learn of Little Lamb's new foster care** program, and would welcome the opportunity to meet again to pick up where we left off. For your convenience, I am attaching my resume for your review. Thank you for your reconsideration. I look forward to speaking with soon.

Sincerely,

Your Name  
(555) 555-1234  
Attachment: resume

# 3

## Know the Job, Know Your Customer

*When you listen to what your customers are saying, you will find that they will usually tell you what they want to hear.*

If your job is in sales, marketing, marketing communications, or in any way close to bringing in revenue for your employer, you will understand the importance of “getting inside your customer’s head” to find out what is important to them, because this allows you to sell the product or service based on the customer’s needs. If you are not connected to revenue generation, you might not know this; either way, understanding what is important to your customer (the employer) is very helpful for anyone engaged in a job search because it helps you understand what it is that customer wants to buy. Knowing what a customer wants to buy makes it much easier to customize your message to their needs.

Now in applying this to your job search we have bad news and good news. First the bad news:

Normally you have to get into conversations with your customers to find out what it is they want to buy.

*Good news:* Fortunately the insights are all available to you in *job postings*. Let me just repeat that, because it's very important: *All the insights you need about your target job are already available to you in job postings*. All you need do is learn how to translate it into useable information, which is what we are going to do now.

On the next couple of pages is a simple exercise called Target Job Deconstruction (TJD). *Do not skip this exercise:* it can make an enormous difference to this job search and to your entire future career development. It will tell you precisely how to prioritize the information you offer employers, and will give you illustrations for your letters, not to mention a new way of looking at your work and what it is you actually get paid for. Last but not least, you will learn the focus of questions at interviews for this job, and will have armed yourself to answer them with illustrations from your work history.

The Target Job Deconstruction process comes from *Knock 'em Dead Resumes & Templates*, and was designed to help you create the most powerful resume possible. If you have read *Knock 'em Dead Resumes*, you already understand the importance of the TJD and, having completed the exercise, know exactly what your customers want to hear about, what you have to tell them, and how you can tell them best. So if you have already completed a TJD, pull it out and skip to the end of this section.

The TJD is geared toward determining the precise requirements of the job you want, matching your skills set to those requirements, and identifying the story you need to tell in your cover letter and resume to make these documents effective. The most difficult part of any letter is knowing what to say and how to say it, but this approach ensures that the topics your letter addresses are going to be of the highest relevance to your customers and that the words you should use will have greatest likelihood of resonating with the reader.

## Target Job Deconstruction

**Step 1.** Collect six job postings for jobs you can do and jobs you would enjoy. If you are interested in more than one job you must prioritize them.

**Step 2.** Create a new document and title it “TJD for \_\_\_\_\_ (your chosen target job title)”

**Step 3.** Start with a first subhead reading “Target job titles.” Then copy and paste in all the variations from your samples. Looking at the result, you will be able to say, “When employers are hiring people like this, they tend to describe the job title with these words.” From this you can come up with a generic Target Job Title to use in your cover letters (and as a target job title for your resume) that is likely to cast the widest net.

**Step 4.** Add a second subhead to the TJD: “Skills/Responsibilities/Requirement/Deliverables, etc.”

**Step 5.** Look through the job postings (it might be easier to print them out and spread them across your desk). You are looking for a requirement that is common to all of your job postings. When you find both the requirement and the most complete description of it, copy and paste it into your document beneath the second subhead (with a #6 beside it, signifying it is common to all six of your samples).

Underneath, add any additional words and phrases used in the other job postings to describe this same area. Repeat this exercise for any other requirements common to all six of your job postings.

**Step 6.** Repeat the exercise but now consider requirements common to five of the jobs, then four, and so on, all the way down to those requirements mentioned in only one job posting.

You now have something unique: a template for how employers prioritize and express their needs when they hire someone like you.

**Step 7.** At their most elemental level, all jobs are the same—they all focus on problem identification, avoidance, and solution. No matter what your job title is, you are being paid to

prevent problems occurring whenever possible within your areas of responsibility and to solve them whenever they do crop up.

Imagine yourself, for a moment, as a hiring manager looking at a cover letter and accompanying resume. Is this exactly the person you are looking for—someone who recognizes and knows how to handle the challenges of the job? Of course it is. When you as a job seeker understand the underlying problem-solving nature of your target job, you gain a valuable insight into the mind of every recruiter, interviewer, and hiring manager you are ever going to meet.

**Step 8.** Now go back to your TJD and start with that first requirement, the one common to all six job postings. Note the problems you will typically need to identify, solve, and/or prevent in the course of a normal workday as you deliver on this requirement of the job. Then list specific examples, big and small, of successful identification, prevention, and/or solution to such problems that you've performed in the past.

**Step 9.** Repeat this with each of the TJD's other requirements, identifying the problems that come up with execution of each aspect of the job and examples of how you deal with them. You'll want to include some of these examples in your cover letters. Others you'll use in your resume, and additional examples will provide you with the ammunition to answer all those interview questions that begin, "Tell me about a time when . . ." Still others may appear in the follow-up letters after the interview.

**Step 10.** Look at each of the deliverables/requirements you identified in steps 5 and 6, and for each one think of the *best* person you have ever seen doing this job and what made him or her stand out. Describe his or her performance, professional behavior, interaction with others, and appearance.

This step has importance for today, tomorrow, and for your long-term success. This is the behavioral profile interviewers want to see in your cover letters, your resume, and at job interviews, and this is the person they would love to see showing up to work every day. In fact,

this is the exact behavioral profile of the person who gets welcomed into the inner circle and gets the plum assignments, raises, and promotions.

Repeat this behavioral identification exercise for each and every requirement listed in your TJD.

**Step 11.** Think of the *worst* person you have ever seen doing this job and answer for yourself what made that person stand out in such a negative way. Describe his or her performance, professional behaviors, interaction with others, and appearance. You are describing the person that no one wants to hire or work with; this valuable step gives you a behavioral profile for professional suicide.

Once you complete and review your TJD, you will have a clear idea of exactly the way all employers think about, prioritize, and express their needs when they hire someone for the job you want. This tells you exactly the points to put in your cover letter that are most likely to get a positive response and prepares you in other ways for job interviews and for success in the job you ultimately choose as your next step.