

# **Student reader: “Job Application Notes”**

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Hogeschool Utrecht: University of Applied Sciences

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# 1. The curriculum vitae (CV)

*Curriculum vitae* is a Latin term which means *course of life*. You must send a curriculum vitae (CV) along with your internship application letter to inform the prospective company of your education, qualifications and past work experience.

In the United States of America, a CV is more commonly known as a *résumé*. The word *résumé* means *summary* in French. It is also sometimes written *resume*.

The purpose of a CV is to get you an interview so make it short and snappy. It is supposed to advertise your skills and accomplishments; it is not supposed to be an autobiography. It must always cover the qualifications and qualities needed by the employer. If you are responding to a job advertisement, these are generally outlined. As the demands of different jobs and employers are different, this implies that your CV should be changed according to its purpose.

**ALWAYS ENSURE THAT GRAMMAR, SPELLING AND MARGINS ARE PERFECT.**

In addition, try to fill up max. 2 A4 pages. Do not write more. If you have so many accomplishments and skills that you need more than one A4 page, congratulations: you are in the envious position of being able to choose the best ones to impress a prospective employer. However, do not think that a busy manager is going to want to spend hours reading your life history. KEEP IT BRIEF. Leave something for the employer to ask you about at the interview.

## 1.1 Standard CV layout

A standard CV can include the following sections<sup>1</sup>:

- (Personal)
- Education
- Work experience
- (Skills: e.g. languages; computer skills)
- (Other activities)
- (Interests)

### Personal

You must include your full name, address, email address, and telephone in the CV.  
Optional inclusions are:

- Sex
- Date of Birth
- Nationality
- Country of Residence (if different from nationality)

These kind of information can be included if relevant for the position you are applying for.

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<sup>1</sup> The sections in brackets are optional.

## Sample CV 1

# LOUISE ANN DARBY

84 Vine Street, Brighton | Victoria, Australia, 3186

Telephone: +61-(0)3-2578225 | E-mail: l.darby@hotmail.au

## PERSONAL

Date of Birth : 19 January 1984

Nationality : Australian

Place of Birth : Sydney, Australia

Country of Residence : Netherlands

## EDUCATION

BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION 2002 - Present

Utrecht Business School,

Hogeschool Utrecht: University of Professional Education, Netherlands

**MAJORS:** International Business and Management Studies; French

- Scored a grade of at least 7 for every subject taken

UNIVERSITY EXCHANGE PROGRAMME (3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR) 2004 - 2005

School of Business, Nottingham Trent University, Great Britain

## OTHER SKILLS

Computer : Access, Word, Excel, PowerPoint

Languages : Native English, fluent Dutch, fluent French, intermediate German, Beginner's Spanish

## WORK EXPERIENCE

MARKETING RESEARCH INTERNSHIP 2006

Oral-B, Brussels, Belgium

- **Researched** and **advised** company on marketing strategies

COMPUTER SALES ASSISTANT 2002 - 2004

Tandy Electronics, Utrecht, Netherlands

- Part-time junior **management** position
- **Sold** a large range of hardware and software

**Other:** Various part-time and casual sales positions

## VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

MEALS ON WHEELS ASSISTANT 1999

Brighton Ladies' Auxiliary, Brighton, Australia

- **Assisted** bi-weekly in delivery of meals to elderly

## INTERESTS

World travel, Windsurfing, Canoeing, Running marathons

## Sample CV 2

# **Rogier Willem Jansen**

Nieuwe Jonkerstraat 5, 1014 FF Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
Telephone: +31 (0)20 5551234  
E-mail: SMBruin@hotmail.com

## **Education:**

- 2007-2011: Bachelor of Business Administration  
Hogeschool Utrecht: University of Professional Education, Faculty of Economics and Management, Utrecht Business School  
**Majors:** Marketing Management and Spanish
- 2006-2007: Universiteit van Amsterdam (University), Faculteit der Economische Wetenschappen en Bedrijfskunde (Faculty of Economics and Business Science)  
**Major:** Algemene Economie (General Economics)
- 2000-2006: VWO (A levels)  
Fahrenheit Scholengemeenschap (Fahrenheit High School), Amsterdam  
**Subjects:** Dutch, English, History, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Economics

## **Work experience:**

- May 2006 **Administrative Assistant**, ABC Health Insurance, Amsterdam  
Data-processing, telephoning, letter writing, basic bookkeeping, complaints handling

## **Volunteer experience:**

- 2006-2008 **Volunteer library assistant**, XYZ Primary School Library, Amstelveen  
Checked out books, returned books to shelves, coached remedial students, supervised pupils

## **Skills:**

**Languages:** Native Dutch, fluent English, advanced Spanish, intermediate German, Beginner's French

**Computer:** Microsoft office, Photoshop

## **Interests:**

Skateboarding, concerts, travelling, building model aeroplanes

## Education

List educational achievements with the most recent first.

- Name of degree / (high school) diploma (including the one you are working on now)
- Years studied (if not yet finished, include expected year of completion)
- Name of department (if relevant)
- School / college
- City & Country (if relevant)
- Majors / Subjects / Courses
- Supporting Accomplishments (if relevant)

## Work experience

List work experience with the most recent first.

- Position
- Dates (years or months and years only)
- Name of company / employer
- City & Country (if relevant)
- Short line or two on responsibilities / achievements

## Other activities

You could include another section titled, for example, Military history, Volunteer experience or Associations. Add information that will support your CV (e.g. Local Council Member 1988-1990).

## Interests

You might like to include some of your interests, especially if they reveal something positive about your character. Interests can also be a way of communicating your value to an employer if you do not yet have much work experience or education.

# 1.2 CV appearance

Your CV should look professional. Use a good computer and printer. Use high quality paper. Most businesses are conservative so generally stick to white or off-white paper.

**Max two A4 papers** are advisable for a CV. Employers are busy people and have to read many CV and application letters. They are not interested in reading a detailed life history; they are looking for an instant impression. If there is too much information, the impact will be diluted and the employer's interest will lessen. Leave the details for the interview. Leave the employer dying to find out more with a spattering of well-chosen key words.

Use generous margins and leave a lot of space to enhance readability. Short statements are better than long paragraphs. Highlight your name, section headings, degrees / diplomas, and positions.

## 1.3 Communicating your value

Make sure that the employer realises that you are capable of doing the work with effective results. You can use examples from past work experience. You can prove that you have the skills and knowledge by including details of your education.

Use action words (managed, developed, planned) to describe what you have done in the past that relates to what the employer will want you to do in the future. Describe results you achieved in past work and not just duties or responsibilities. Write down for yourself what you want the employer thinks of you. E.g.:

I want the employer to know that I can manage staff in an accounting firm:  
I intend to demonstrate this by giving an example of a previous job where I have successfully managed staff.  
I will show my outgoing personality through my interests and prove that I have relevant knowledge by describing my education.

Think about what kinds of qualities are important for the jobs you are applying for and how you plan to show you have these.

## 1.4 Keeping the CV simple

The goal of a CV is to secure an interview for a job. A CV should be a brief document to get an employer interested in you as a job candidate. Therefore, leave out all unnecessary information. Try to condense your CV as much as possible through constant revision. Details such as your passport number or tax number should not be included.

If you have graduated from college, you need not include information about high school unless you went to an impressive high school or want to show which country you studied in. (Everything in your CV should have a reason for being there.)

### **Eliminate repetition:**

Do not describe the same skills under different jobs. You can leave out most personal information. References and company addresses are a waste of valuable space: if the employer wants this information, she will ask. You need not write that references will be available on request as this is always assumed. You can also leave out negative information such as reasons for leaving jobs or salaries. Again, if the employer is interested, she will ask.

## 2. CV types

CVs can be organised in a variety of ways to suit your needs. You should choose the type that works best for you. The three main types of CV are the chronological, functional and targeted.

### 2.1 The chronological CV

The chronological CV emphasises work experience and personal history. It shows that you are experienced and established on one career path.

#### **Advantages of the chronological CV**

It is advantageous to use a chronological CV when you have had a series of jobs in the same area that reflect a pattern of growth. If past titles and employers are impressive, this is a useful type of CV. It can be used with a minimum of adaptation when applying for a variety of jobs in the same field. It de-emphasises the fact that a person has performed a limited number of skills in past jobs.

#### **Layout of the chronological CV**

See A.1.1 on pages 4-5.

#### **Instructions for the chronological CV**

For this type of CV, start with your most recent work experience and work backwards. You should give most space to the most recent experience. Do not repeat skills or accomplishments common to several positions. Highlight major accomplishments and responsibilities. If you have recently completed relevant education, place 'Education' first. If your latest job is more impressive, place 'Work Experience' first. Always keep the job you are applying for in mind when describing accomplishments and skills.

See page 9 for a sample chronological CV.

## **Chronological CV sample**

(Source: Jackson, T. (1994) *Perfect Job Search Strategies: Over 100 Proven Strategies for Getting the Job You Want in Today's Challenging Market*. London: Piatkus, p. 100.)

## Gillian Jones

24 Beech Road, Blaby, Leicester LE8 7GX  
Mobile: 0776324716  
E-mail: g.jones@leics.ac.uk

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### Career Objective

Forward-thinking and confident media graduate with well-honed communication skills and proven ability to build relationships, seeking an entry-level position in public relations.

### Education

- 2008 - 2011      **2:1 class BA Communications, Media and Society**, University of Leicester  
Relevant modules include: Advertising, Culture and Communication, Media Audiences, The Media in Britain, Media, Identity and the Popular, New Media and the Wired World, Analysing Communication Processes
- 2004 - 2008      Trinity Upper School, Nottingham  
**A Levels** - English (A), Sociology (A), Psychology (B)  
**GCSEs** - 11 GCSEs, grades A\* - C including English and Mathematics

### Relevant Work Experience

Summer 2010      **Internship**, Hopwood PR Agency, Leicester

- Tasked with writing press releases, speaking to journalists on the telephone, organising photo shoots.
- Managed agency's Facebook and Twitter accounts and posted content on the website blog.
- Supported Agency Deputy Director in a project on behalf of a national client to help produce publicity materials and initiate a social media campaign.
- Gained insight into what skills are needed to establish a successful PR career by talking to staff.

2009 - 2010      **Features Writer**, The Ripple, University of Leicester

- Conducted research for articles and wrote pieces to reflect some of the typical issues and concerns facing students at university.
- Carried out proof-reading and presented ideas to the editorial team for forthcoming editions.
- Required effective time management skills in order to meet tight deadlines.

### Other Work Experience

2010 - 2011      **Bar Staff**, The Watering Hole, Leicester

- Popular drinking venue within central city location, constantly interacting with customers during peak periods.
- Entrusted with responsibility of cashing up not long after starting employment, making sure that the tills balanced and takings were correct.
- Demonstrates capability to work in a fast-paced environment faced with competing demands.

2008 - 2010      **Sales Adviser**, K Shoes, Nottingham

- Worked as part of a team to help achieve set monthly targets which consistently delivered on, earning our team best sales team in regional area.
- Advised and assisted customers, recommended products and new stock, maintaining a friendly yet efficient service.
- Took charge of running of shop floor and supervising other junior sales assistants, delegating tasks when shop manager was redeployed to other stores.

## 2.2 The functional CV

The functional CV organises your experience according to areas of skill. It highlights your strengths and accomplishments.

### Advantages of the functional CV

The functional CV is useful when you are looking for your first job. It also has advantages if you have been out of work for a while, have had many different jobs or are thinking of changing the direction of your career. If you have not had a secure work history but have (used) a variety of skills, you should consider using this format.

### Layout of the functional CV

The functional CV includes the following sections:

- Full name, address, email, telephone and fax numbers
- Function titles (two or three)
- Education
- Work experience
- Other activities

### Instructions for the functional CV

In a functional CV, you include four or five paragraphs or sections, each describing an area of expertise or involvement. The functions (e.g. Design, Research, Supervision) should be placed in order of importance with the most relevant first and in slightly more detail. Under each function title, stress your accomplishments – but you need not mention the job or activity where they took place. Place 'Education' or 'Work Experience' first according to which is more impressive. You may not even decide to include a 'Work Experience' section if you have a spotty record but expect questions on this during the interview.

See page 11 for a sample functional CV.

## **Functional CV sample**

(Source: Jackson, T. (1994) *Perfect Job Search Strategies: Over 100 Proven Strategies for Getting the Job You Want in Today's Challenging Market*. London: Piatkus, p. 102.)

### **MARILYN M. GRANT**

79 Cliff Court, Brighton, Sussex BN22 5RW  
(0987) 677 4567

#### **INSURANCE LAW**

- Advised management of insurance underwriting firm on legality of insurance transactions
- Studied court decisions and recommended changes in wording of insurance policies to conform with law and/or protect company from unwarranted claims
- Advised claims department personnel on legality of claims filed on the underwriters to insure against undue payments
- Advised personnel engaged in drawing up legal documents such as insurance contracts

#### **COMPANY LAW**

- Made an extensive study of the corporate structure, including legal rights, obligations and privileges
- Acted as agent for several corporations in various transactions
- Studied decisions, statutes and findings of quasi-judicial bodies

#### **PROPERTY LAW**

- Handled sale and transfer of buildings and land
- Instituted searches to establish ownership
- Drew up deeds, mortgages and leases
- Acted as trustee of property investment funds

#### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

1980-Present      **COMMERCIAL VEHICLE UNDERWRITERS COMPANY LTD** Brighton, Sussex  
**Insurance Services Supervisor**

#### **EDUCATION**

1987                      UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, School of Law  
LL.B—Insurance Law, Company Law, Estate Planning, Taxation

## 2.3 The targeted CV

The targeted CV lists your capabilities and accomplishments according to the requirements of the job you are applying for. This implies that you must write a new CV for every job application.

### Advantages of the targeted CV

You should use a targeted CV if you have skills but little experience and are prepared to write a new CV for each job you apply for.

### Layout of the targeted CV

The targeted CV includes the following sections:

- Your name, address, email, telephone and fax numbers
- Job target (a very specific objective)
- Capabilities
- Accomplishments
- Education
- Work experience
- Other activities

### Instructions for the targeted CV

When writing a targeted CV, you should be very specific about the particular job you want. Your capabilities (what you can do) and accomplishments (what you have done) must be written on one or two lines and be relevant to the job you are after. The 'Education' and 'Work Experience' sections should be brief.

See page 13 for a sample targeted CV.

## Sample targeted CV

(Source: Jackson, T. (1994) *Perfect Job Search Strategies: Over 100 Proven Strategies for Getting the Job You Want in Today's Challenging Market*. London: Piatkus, p. 104.)

### DAVID C. HALPERN

62 Peterfield Road  
Basingstoke, Hants, RG77 4PX  
(0167) 234 6789

#### JOB TARGET

SALES OR MARKETING MANAGEMENT WITH AN INTERNATIONAL COMPANY

#### CAPABILITIES

- Market and sell industrial and agricultural chemicals
- Direct and coordinate activities concerned with research and development of new concepts, ideas and basic data on company products, services and philosophy
- Plan and formulate aspects of research and development proposals, such as purpose of project, application of findings, cost of project and equipment requirements
- Approve and submit feasibility proposals to management for consideration and allocation of funds
- Negotiate contracts with consulting firms to perform studies
- Achieve a competitive edge through effective use of know-how in product coordination, ship chartering and letters of credit

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Managed cost analyses pertinent to specific products and countries in relation to total consumption, pricing, competitors, market share, local production facilities, freighting and credit
- Successfully gained market information through agents, distributors and international government agencies
- Arranged sensitive offshore deals and reciprocal deals with competitors in Europe, the Far East and Latin America
- Sold industrial packaging materials to blue chip companies
- Increased market share of an industrial paper product from 27% to 31% in six-month period

#### EXPERIENCE

##### 1986-1994 **PRODUCT MANAGER**

British International Chemicals plc, Fareham, Hampshire

##### 1980-1986 **INTERNATIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE**

Crown Chemicals and Coatings Ltd, Andover, Hampshire

##### 1974-1980 **SHIP'S NAVIGATOR**

British Cargo Shipping Ltd, Southampton

#### EDUCATION

1985 UNIVERSITY OF BRADFORD  
MBA – International Business

## 3. Telephoning companies

The telephone has advantages over writing because feedback is immediate. It is also more personal than writing and, if used well, a telephone call can give the impression that you are reliable, efficient and courteous. Furthermore, it is easier to get the attention of the listener on the telephone than it is with a letter.

On the other hand, the receiver may be unprepared or the call might be badly timed. Furthermore, if used badly, the telephone can create a bad image.

### 3.1 Preparing for the call

When telephoning, it is important to be polite and efficient. You must be considerate of the receiver's needs. You should prepare your call. Plan what you are going to say. Write down your objectives for calling. Make sure you have everything you need (your CV, the job advertisement, etc.) close at hand. Also, plan a follow up procedure.

Keep a level head when calling. Relax your mind and body before making the call as tension can cause a bad impression.

Put yourself in the right frame of mind. If you want to sound more authoritative, stand up. If you want to sound more relaxed, sit back in your chair.

### 3.2 Effective calls

Do not waste time. When you have finished all you have to say, end the call. Do not draw it out unnecessarily. Business people are busy people and you do not want to seem inefficient.

When speaking, it is normal to use body language to make ourselves clearer. It is not possible for people to see your hand gestures and facial expressions on the telephone so you must speak more clearly and slowly than usual. For effective communication, avoid complex language. Do not repeat yourself. Ask questions to clarify points. Do not interrupt the other speaker.

If you tend to get nervous when using the telephone, try to imagine the person on the other end is in the same room as you. Imagine how they are reacting. Also, use body language even though the other person cannot see you. This will help your voice sound more natural.

Make sure you listen carefully to the other speaker. There might be hidden messages, which are evident by the speaker's tone. It can be easy to be distracted by what is going on around you when speaking on the telephone, so try to concentrate exclusively on the telephone call.

### 3.3 Difficult calls

Cold calls can be very difficult. You may have received someone's name but not met him or her before. To help in these circumstances, it is especially necessary to plan. Decide your objectives before calling. Make sure you have everything you need close by. Get quickly to the point and be assertive if necessary. Do not get personal or lose your temper.

## **3.4 Following up a letter**

When applying for a job, you generally have the choice of first establishing contact by telephoning or writing a letter. The disadvantage of calling before writing is that you have a lot of pressure to make a good impression. On the other hand, you have the advantage of having a second chance because you can also send a letter and CV later.

Alternatively, you can send a CV and letter before calling. The letter can help make a good impression and give you a means of starting the conversation.

## **3.5 Getting by the secretary**

Sometimes it can be difficult to reach the person who makes the hiring decisions. Especially when you are responding to an advertisement, you might end up talking to the personnel department. You could avoid this by asking for the person you want by name. If the secretary asks if she can help, ask whether she can arrange an interview for you to meet the employer. Remember to be polite at all times, even if you feel frustrated.

Another tactic is to try calling after 5 o'clock when the secretary has possibly left. Leaving a message will probably not be effective. Persistence is more likely to pay off.

## **3.6 Overcoming objections**

Employers are generally busy people and may think a meeting with you is a waste of time. Therefore, it is necessary for you to be persuasive by having a clear purpose for the meeting. You should focus on what you can do for the company and not on what the company can do for you.

If the employer says he cannot see you now, ask for an appointment, perhaps with someone else. If the employer makes other objections, make it clear that you understand each objection (by repeating it) and then suggest another possibility. See page 68 for a list of objections you can prepare for in advance.

## 4. The application letter

The purpose of a job application letter is not to ask for a job; it is to ask for an interview. The information in the letter should supplement the information in your CV and create interest in you as a job candidate. You must show that you have something to offer the employer. To do this, you must find out about the employer's needs.

### 4.1 Application letter layout

A job application letter should include the following parts<sup>2</sup>:

- Your address, telephone, email and fax
- Date
- Inside address
- Salutation
- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion
- Complimentary close
- Signature
- Your name
- (Enclosure(s))

You will find sample internship application letters, written by past students, on pages 20 and 21 (the names and addresses have been changed). There are sample job application letters on pages 22 and 23 (the addresses have been changed).

#### **Your address, email, telephone, and fax**

Do not write your name (or position) at the top of the letter. These belong under your signature. You may write your company name at the top if this is appropriate.

For international letters, include the country name and international dialling codes.

#### **Date**

Do not abbreviate the date. 02/08/13 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August to the British but the 8<sup>th</sup> of February to the Americans.

#### **Inside address**

Include the recipient's title (Mr, Ms, Dr, etc), name, position, company name and address here. You may include the recipient's first name or initials as well as a title. *Be accurate!!!*

For international letters, include the country name.

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<sup>2</sup> The sections in brackets are optional.

## Salutations

A number of different salutations can be used in a letter. The "To Whom It May Concern" format is generally used when giving someone references. It represents a standard formal letter addressed to a wide audience. It is not useful for job application.

To Whom It May Concern

Yours faithfully

"Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam" can be used if you wish to be very formal, especially if you are writing to someone for the first time. They can also be used if you do not know the name of the person you are writing to. It is, however, much more effective to write a job application letter to a specific person.

Dear Sir

Yours faithfully

Dear Madam

Yours faithfully

"Dear Sir/Madam" or "Dear Sir or Madam" can be used if you do not know the recipient's sex. Again, it is more effective to find out the recipient's full name and title before writing a job application letter.

Dear Sir/Madam

Yours faithfully

Dear Sir or Madam

Yours faithfully

"Dear Mr Smith" and "Dear Ms Smith" are less formal. They can be used if you know the recipient's name, especially when contact has already been made. Please note that Miss and Mrs are seldom used in business these days. The term Ms can be applied to all women. Never include the person's first name or initial here.

Dear Mr Smith

Yours sincerely

Dear Ms Smith

Yours sincerely

First names can be used for close colleagues if your relationship is on a first name basis. It would not be appropriate to address someone by her first name in a job application letter.

Dear Jason

Kind regards

Dear Jennie

Regards

The Americans use a much wider range of salutations than the British but these guidelines cover all situations.

## Introduction

In the introductory paragraph, you should introduce yourself and explain your purpose:

With reference to ..., ...

This letter is with reference to your advertisement for a ...(position) in the ...(newspaper name) on ...(date).

Further to our telephone conversation of ...(date), ...

I am writing to request/apply for ...

I am writing to enquire whether/about ...

I am writing in response to ...

Here are some sample introductory paragraphs written by past second year Utrecht Business School students:

### **Excerpt 1**

I am a student at the Hogeschool Utrecht: University of Professional Education where I am studying for a Bachelor of Business Administration degree. A key element of the programme is getting a clear picture of business life. To this end, students are given the opportunity to do an internship towards the end of their second year of study.

### **Excerpt 2**

As a second year student at the Hogeschool Utrecht: University of Professional Education, I am currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in International Business and Management Studies. I am privileged to have the opportunity to engage in an 11-week internship programme.

### **Excerpt 3**

I am writing with reference to our telephone conversation of 7 September concerning an internship at your company. I am a second year student of a Bachelor of Business Administration degree programme in the Netherlands, majoring in Marketing Management. This course gives me the opportunity to gain work experience with an innovative company for a period of eleven weeks.

## **Body**

In the paragraphs that make up the body of the letter, you should move from general to more specific information.

Only include one idea in each paragraph. Remember to link paragraphs with linking words to give structure (e.g. however, therefore, moreover, etc.). Keep paragraphs fairly short and snappy.

Refer to your CV to provide some basic facts about yourself:

As indicated by my enclosed resume/curriculum vitae, I am/have ...  
Please find enclosed/attached ...

Explain how your skills could benefit the company:

... and I believe I would have a lot to offer ...  
Through my ... studies, I have come to appreciate ...

Sell yourself with confidence:

I feel certain that I am qualified to help ... at your company.  
I am sure I would ...

Make your appeal explicit:

I would be grateful if you could ...  
I would appreciate it if you could ...  
I would be obliged if you could ...

Above all, be original to attract the employer's attention. The employer will not be impressed if he receives several letters, which are the same.

Below are some more excerpts from letters written by past second year Utrecht Business School students. Please note that the appeals are very specific.

### **Excerpt 4**

I am now studying Marketing Management and I hope that I can participate in some marketing and sales aspects within the NIKE Benelux organisation. In this way, I can

learn about your company: for instance, customer behaviour, promotion and how to function within a company of this size.

#### **Excerpt 5**

Besides currently studying in English, I also lived in the United States for seven years and in various other European countries before that. It is important to me that I utilise the skills I gained living abroad in a job. Past work experience has taught me that I enjoy working with people and helping them. I believe I can achieve this through Kelly Detacheringen.

It would be of great interest to me if, besides working on the help desk, I could rotate within the company and learn first-hand how the business operates.

### **Conclusion**

Try to only include positive information in your letter. If you must mention anything negative, leave it until the end of the letter where it will have less impact. An excerpt from a past student's letter follows:

#### **Excerpt 6**

I trust that this letter has given you a good impression. I hope that you will give me a chance to explain my ambitions in more detail in an interview and that we can discuss the possibilities of doing my internship at Motorola.

### **Complimentary close**

Your letter must include a polite ending:

I hope to hear (look forward to hearing) from you shortly/at your earliest convenience/without delay/as soon as possible/soon.

I look forward (very much) to meeting/hearing from you (soon).

If there is any more information you require, I will be pleased to supply it.

### **Signature**

Leave a space for your signature between the salutation and your name.

### **Your name**

Type your name in full with your position on the line below if appropriate.

### **Enclosure(s)**

If any enclosures are included, refer to them in the letter but also list them at the bottom of the letter. There are a number of methods for doing this:

Encl.

Enclosure

Enclosure: CV

Enclosures: 2

## Sample internship application letter 1

Roodstraat 34-2  
1074 AA Amsterdam  
The Netherlands<sup>3</sup>  
Tel/fax: +31 20 555 432<sup>4</sup>  
Email: Schmidt123@hotmail.com

Mr John P Brady  
Personnel Manager  
AAA Bank  
99 Main Road  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Australia<sup>5</sup>

1 November 2008<sup>6</sup>

Dear Mr Brady<sup>7</sup>

I am a second year business student studying for a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in the Netherlands. One feature of this course is the opportunity for an 11-week period of work experience.

As the course is in English, I would like to have the chance to work in an English speaking country. I chose Australia because I would like to explore a totally different culture and I am really attracted to the fact that Australia has such an adventurous image.

I am sure this arrangement can be mutually beneficial. I could, for example, do marketing research or basic bookkeeping at your company. I could also assist in the marketing, sales or administration department.

If it is convenient, I would like to do my period of work experience with you from xx April until xx July 2009.

It would really be appreciated if your company could contribute towards expenses.

I have already got a valid working holiday visa for Australia and I am fully insured.

I hope to hear from you soon in a favourable way.

Yours sincerely



Robin Schmidt<sup>8</sup>

Enclosed: curriculum vitae

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<sup>3</sup> Do not put your name at the top of the page.

<sup>4</sup> Make sure that you include the international dialling code of the Netherlands if the letter is going abroad.

<sup>5</sup> You must include the name, position, company and company address of the recipient in that order. Do not forget the country if the letter is going abroad.

<sup>6</sup> Do not forget the date. Do not write 04-03-2009 as this would be March in the UK but April in the USA.

<sup>7</sup> You should do your best to find out the name of the recipient. Open application letters rarely succeed. For a female, use Ms (e.g. Ms Smith) whether she is married or not. If you really cannot find out the name of the recipient, use Dear Sir/Madam with Yours faithfully at the end.

<sup>8</sup> You must sign and print your name at the end of the letter.

## Sample internship application letter 2

Zwartstraat 3  
2528 SE Den Haag  
The Netherlands  
Tel/fax: +31-70-5555555  
E-mail: 55555@econ.hvu.nl

Mr Gary Paperweight  
Training Manager  
Adidas Middle East  
PO Box 55555  
Abu Dhabi  
United Arab Emirates

7 October 1999

Dear Mr Paperweight,

Further to our telephone conversation of 6 October 1999, I would like to ask for an internship at Adidas Middle East.

I am a second year international business student at the Hogeschool Utrecht: University of Professional Education, majoring in Marketing Management. Starting April 2000, I will have the opportunity to gain three months of work experience.

Considering that I am an aerobics instructor, it would be a wonderful opportunity to do an internship at a sports-minded company such as Adidas. I chose this company because Adidas stands for top-quality products used by millions of sportsmen all over the world. Since I am studying international business, I would really like to work for a company with such an international reputation.

My main areas of interest are: sales, marketing and public relations. If it is possible, I would like to rotate through these departments. This would enable me to see different aspects of a multinational company.

I have excellent communication, language and computer skills. I can easily adapt to changing situations because I have lived and worked in different countries for three years. It will be no problem for me to obtain a residence visa and work permit for Abu Dhabi. Full insurance is required to get both these permits. In addition, I have started a course to further improve my command of the Arabic language.

It would be greatly appreciated if your company could contribute towards expenses.

I look forward to hearing from you in a favourable way.

Yours sincerely,



Erik Bell

Enclosed: Curriculum Vitae

## Sample job application letter 1

Xlaan 55  
5555 YZ Hoofdstad  
The Netherlands  
Tel: +31 (0)6 54 555 555  
E-mail: me@hotmail.com

Mr Peter Browning  
Sales Recruiter  
Up-And-Away Express  
PO Box 55555  
San Jose  
CA 95555  
United States of America

1 September 2013

Dear Mr Browning

This letter is with reference to your advertisement for a District Sales Manager on the HotJobs website on 26 August 2013.

I am a graduate of the Utrecht Business School, University of Professional Education, with a bachelor's degree in Marketing Management and Business Logistics, international business courses taught in English and emphasizing management, economics and languages.

As indicated by my enclosed curriculum vitae, I am fluent in both Dutch and English, and have lived and studied in several countries around the world. I also have good customer relations and managerial experience at numerous international companies in Europe and North America. Furthermore, I have used my logistical knowledge in several United Nations operations throughout Africa.

I feel certain that I am qualified to fulfil the duties of a District Sales Manager at Up-And-Away Express. My education, skills, work history and international background have prepared me to work in an international setting and I feel it is this experience that has helped me understand the problems facing an international company. Moreover, I am highly motivated and capable of succeeding in all tasks given to me.

I trust this letter has given you a good impression. I hope that you will give me an opportunity to further explain my ambitions and goals for Up-And-Away Express in more detail in an interview at your convenience. I look forward to hearing from you and I thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely



Jessica Vredevoort

Enclosed: curriculum vitae

## Sample job application letter 2

Hoofdlaan 25  
3800 AA Amersfoort  
Tel: (0)33-555 5555  
Email: T.Visser33@hotmail.com

17 September 2013

Ms Caroline Whitestock  
Find-a-job Agency  
Post Office Box 12345  
1000 AA Amsterdam

Dear Ms Whitestock,

I am writing in response to your advertisement for the position of general manager, which appeared in the "NRC Handelsblad" on 6 September 2013.

I am a graduate of the Hogeschool Utrecht: University of Professional Education with a bachelor's degree in Finance and Accounting, an international business course taught in English and emphasizing management, economics, marketing and languages.

Born in the Netherlands and raised in the United States, I decided to return to my native country eight years ago. This move allowed me to reacquaint myself with a language, culture and family that were almost foreign to me. Furthermore, moving to another country has made me much more mobile, mature and willing to take on any task that may prove to be a challenge.

As highlighted in my enclosed curriculum vitae, I am fluent in both Dutch and English. Over the last ten years, I have also had much sales, customer relations and managerial experience at numerous international companies in the US and Europe, including two major banking institutions and one insurance firm. Additionally, I have had varied marketing experience over the past three years here in the Netherlands.

Because of my international background, I believe that I have much to offer your client. My education, skills and work history have prepared me to work in an international setting and I feel it is this experience that has helped me understand the problems facing an international company. I am highly motivated, creative and deal well with being in charge. I am confident that I have the proper tools to do well as a general manager at your client's company.

If possible, I would like to meet with you sometime soon to further discuss the position and any questions you or I might have. I look forward to hearing from you and I thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Tessa Visser

Enc: cv

## 4.2 Application letter appearance

It is crucial that you make a good impression through the appearance of your letter. Generally, the American block style is preferable which means that paragraphs should have spaces between them and should **not** be indented. If the letter is short, make the margins bigger. For balance, leave more space at the bottom than at the top. For improved readability, leave out unnecessary punctuation in the date and addresses.

## 4.3 Application letter conventions

It is particularly important to follow letter-writing conventions when applying for a job. Do not include abbreviations, except for titles (e.g. Mr, Ms, Dr) and the company name if necessary (e.g. Qantas, IBM, ABN/AMRO). You should **not** include a subject line or the place of writing on the date line. Follow the rules for salutations carefully and mention enclosures in the text of the letter. Grammar and spelling are extremely important.

Written English is more formal than spoken English. Avoid colloquialisms like "reckon" and "chat", and contractions like "can't" and "I'll". On the other hand, do not go overboard by using trite language like "humbly yours". The employer will be trying to gauge your character so try to sound natural.

It is very important to be concise but clear. Keep the letter brief. Remove all redundancies.

## 5. Application letter fine-tuning

So far, standard techniques for writing job application letters have been covered. This next section goes further to examine ways, which can make your job application letters more successful. You should, for instance, use a strong opening, which quickly gets to the point. If you have an impressive contact name, you should use it in the first sentence:

Jayne Smythe from Excel suggested that I write to you about ...

The task of your job application letter is to sell your abilities on the job market. It should introduce your CV and make the employer realise your value. The focus should be on getting an interview.

A good letter should be addressed to a specific person. It should show that you have researched the employer's needs and demonstrate how you can meet them. The company will be interested in knowing why you chose them and how they will benefit from hiring you. They will also want to know what you expect from them. To be most effective, you should be assertive by asking for an interview.

Make sure your letter does not take up more than one A4 page. Busy managers do not have time to read long letters.

### 5.1 Personalising the application letter

Write a new letter for each job you apply for. Show how your experience and skills relate to the employer's needs. Demonstrate what you know about the company and job. Point out parts of your CV which are relevant to the employer. Do not expect the employer to have to find them herself.

Make sure your letter arouses interest: be original. Be enthusiastic without sounding pushy or desperate. Strike a balance between professionalism and friendliness.

Show initiative by stating that you will follow up the letter with a telephone call rather than expecting the employer to have to call you.

Your letter should state why you chose the company. Here are some excerpts from letters written by past students (some company names have been changed):

#### **Excerpt 7**

I heard about your agency through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which sent me a brochure describing the various categories of overseas assignments. Your agency appealed to me because it supports human development in Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Caribbean. Africa would be the most challenging for me as this is a place where I could develop my language skills and cultural interests.

#### **Excerpt 8**

As an active stockholder of Sekure Bank, I am very interested in all the company's financial changes, strategic developments and takeovers. I understand that Sekure Bank has substantial interest in the emerging markets of Eastern Europe.

#### **Excerpt 9**

After reading about Kars-r-us on the Internet, it gave me the impression of a very successful and innovative company. Kars-r-us appeals to me because of its superior total quality management and flexibility. These are key elements needed for survival in today's market.

Another point is that Kars-r-us is not afraid to try something new, always trying to improve its products and provide excellent customer service. Kars-r-us inspires people to get the best out of themselves. These are goals of great importance to me.

I would really like to do my internship at Kars-r-us because I believe I have the right team spirit to fit in with your company.

**Excerpt 10**

Having researched several profiles of your company, I am very interested in an internship.

**Excerpt 11**

The reason I am applying for an internship at NIKE is that I have a lot of affinity with the sports branch considering my background as a player of the Dutch National Handball Team (1994-1996). At the moment, I have stopped my career as an amateur player to pursue a career in business.

NIKE has always manufactured products which I have personally used and I hope that I can make a substantial contribution in the future.

**Excerpt 12**

I am very attracted to your company, which is well known for its professionalism and high-quality service.

## 5.2 Targeting the employer

Send your letter to an employer by name. Mass mailings of CVs are generally very ineffective. Find out who does the hiring in a company (not always the personnel department) and target that person in your letter. Make sure you spell his name correctly!

You might need some ingenuity to find out the hiring decision maker's name. You could find out the name of the manager of the department you would like to work in by just calling the company and asking. You could also ask an acquaintance who works at the company.

## 5.3 Showing knowledge of the employer

Show you have initiative by demonstrating that you have researched the employer's needs and considered how you can meet them. Find out about the company's products, history and competition. Show how you can contribute:

Your department uses XYZ software and I have used this for two years.

Demonstrate how the employer can benefit from hiring you. Describe your skills, which will assist the employer. List accomplishments that prove you can contribute to the company.

**Excerpt 13**

From the educational qualifications outlined on the curriculum vitae enclosed, you will see that I am internationally orientated. Experience studying and working in the United States of America guarantees my flexibility and adaptability.

**Excerpt 14**

The fact that I am familiar with the cultures of Eastern Europe, speak fluent Russian, Dutch and English and am now learning French and German, could be useful in helping conquer this huge but unpredictable ex-Soviet market with 350 million potential buyers.

I am sure it could be mutually beneficial for Company X to train its own highly-motivated, ambitious, analytical go-getter as a marketing manager for Eastern Europe.

**Excerpt 15**

I am convinced the arrangement can be mutually beneficial as I learn very fast and have proficient communication skills, supported by work experience in telemarketing and knowledge of several European languages: namely, Polish, English, Dutch and Spanish.

**Excerpt 16**

I am an open-minded person and eager to work. I like working on projects, doing research (in teams or individually) and working towards a particular goal, for example doing market research for a company.

I believe that a concern like Motorola will give me the possibility to explore my capabilities and enhance my skills.

**Excerpt 17**

The course here in Utrecht is conducted in the English language. I have lived in the Netherlands for three years and am fully fluent in both Dutch and English. Since I am of Indonesian origin, I am multilingual and no stranger to an international environment.

While majoring in Finance and Accounting, I have a well-rounded knowledge of general business aspects. I am confident that an arrangement will benefit both parties. I am willing to assist in bookkeeping tasks or other odd jobs within your company.

**Excerpt 18**

I possess analytical skills, a business sense, an entrepreneurial spirit and an ability to work in teams. I would enjoy the opportunity to work with committed and talented colleagues in a stimulating and professional environment.

## 5.4 Asking for a meeting

Make an explicit request for an interview at the end of your letter. Do not leave everything up to the employer. Follow up your letter with a telephone call a few days after the employer has received it to show that you are motivated and organised.

## 6. Interviewing techniques

Before an interview, you will need to be prepared. You should:

1. Find out about the company (products, services, size, etc.);
2. Work out what you can contribute (languages, computer skills, bookkeeping, telephoning, research, letter writing, etc.); and
3. Prepare questions you wish to ask (your duties, the company, etc.).

Impress the employer with:

1. Body language (establish eye contact; have a firm handshake; adopt an upright, attentive (but relaxed) posture; do not cross limbs; avoid nervous fidgeting);
2. Appearance (wear conservative, clean, ironed, well-fitting clothes; wear good, (polished) shoes; have tidy hair; have clean nails);
3. Punctuality (have time to freshen up and read over your notes when you arrive);
4. Voice (sound interested and interesting; vary your tone); and
5. Notebook (bring questions and take notes if necessary).

Possible interview questions to prepare beforehand:

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What is a *hogeschool*?
3. Where is Utrecht?
4. Tell me about the IBMS course.
5. Do you enjoy your studies?
6. What have you learned at school or college that will help you with this job?
7. How difficult is (or was) school or college for you?
8. Do you have any previous work experience?
9. What in your past work history particularly relates to our needs?
10. What is the best thing your previous employer(s) could say about you?
11. What is the worst thing your previous employer(s) could say about you?
12. What were your greatest accomplishments in your last job (or at school or college)?
13. Give an example of a problem you handled in your last job (or at school or college).
14. Why did you leave your last job?
15. Do you have any experience performing under pressure?
16. How do you cope with stress?
17. Would you describe yourself as an honest person?
18. Do you have any experience dealing with customers?
19. What type of people do you prefer to work with?
20. What are your greatest strengths / weaknesses?
21. What aspects of your performance do you think could be most improved?

22. What do you know about our company?
23. What interests you in our company?
24. How can you contribute to our company?
25. What kind of work would you expect to do for us?
26. How would our company benefit from hiring you?
27. What do you expect us to do for you?
28. What do you hope to gain from this work experience?
29. What kind of work do you hope to do in the future?
30. How long will you stay with the job if we offer it to you?
31. What are your long-term career goals? How will this job help you meet them?
32. Where do you want to be five years from now?
33. Do you have any (more) questions?
34. **Why should I hire you?**

The interview is the most important part of your job application. It is essential to be well prepared by finding out the employer's needs and then working out your capabilities and accomplishments that fit those needs. You should also prepare insightful questions to demonstrate your interest.

During the interview, it is very important to make a good first impression. Employers usually make up their minds within the first minute. Act like the employer's equal. Remember that the purpose of an interview is not only for the employer to decide whether she wants to hire you but also for you to decide whether the job suits *your* needs.

## 6.1 Preparing for a interview

For an effective interview, you must do some research about the employer. You should find out about the company's products and/or services. You will need to learn something about the industry as well. For instance, you might research about its history, current trends or future prospects. You should also find out about the job and work out how your education and work experience are relevant.

It is crucial that you prepare insightful questions before the interview. You might want to know about the day-to-day tasks of the job, your role in the company, the amount of responsibility you will be given, training possibilities or growth potential of the company.

## 6.2 Attitude at an interview

You will want to show that you are a highly motivated job candidate. There are a number of ways to do this. When you greet the interviewer, establish eye contact and look alert. Shake hands firmly. Listen actively making clear and bright responses rather than vaguely nodding or softly murmuring, "Mmmm".

## 6.3 Dressing for an interview

Your choice of dress is important. Usually, conservative clothing is best although a bright scarf or tie could give you some spark. For women, a good choice is usually a conservative suit or well-made skirt and blouse. (Make sure your skirt is not too short and your blouse is not too sexy.) Men should wear a high-quality business suit. Whatever the choice, it is crucial that clothes are clean and well pressed. Tidy hair, clean nails and polished shoes make a good impression. Clanking jewellery, heavy perfume or too much makeup do not.

## 6.4 Tips for an interview

To ensure a good impression, be punctual. If you can arrive a few minutes early, you will give yourself time to freshen up. Make sure your clothes fit well, are clean and tidy. Make sure you have a few questions ready.

Establish eye contact and firmly shake hands when you meet the interviewer. Be attentive (lean forward slightly) to show interest. Vary your voice: at times, you should sound interested; at others, thoughtful. You might need to take notes so have a pen and paper ready. Ask questions when you are not sure about something. If the interviewer does not seem to be paying attention, change your tone of voice or ask a question.

Posture is very important. Sit and stand upright but also look relaxed. Try not to cross your arms or legs as this indicates that you are barricading yourself. In addition, do not let your nerves show through hand tapping, leg shaking, squirming in your seat, fidgeting or talking excessively.

Try to avoid sounding too desperate for the job: give the employer the impression that you have other opportunities. Questions about salary and benefits should be asked towards the end of the interview.

At the end of the interview, you should summarise your skills and experience, which the company can use. Lastly, you should find out what the next step after the interview will be. Give the employer the impression that your time is valuable.

## 6.5 Rehearsing for an interview

A good way to prepare for an interview is practising by role-playing. Prepare some interview questions and ask someone (a business person would be ideal) to interview you. Inform the interviewer of the type of job you want and show him your CV. If possible, record the interview and ask the interviewer to take notes just as a normal interviewer would. Begin by entering the room to enhance authenticity.

Ask a third person to take notes on your body language and interviewing techniques. Accept feedback in silence. If you interrupt with objections ("But in a *real* interview, I wouldn't ...."), the feedback will not end up being very useful. If any difficult questions were asked that you were not prepared for, write them down and think more about how you would answer them next time.

## 6.6 Following up after an interview

After every interview, you should write notes on your performance to help you improve next time. Comment on your successes and failings. Did you get on well with the interviewer? Was there anything about yourself you did not convey well? Did you lack information about the company? How could you have improved your performance? Were there any questions you were unable to answer?

# Reference

Jackson, T. (1994) *Perfect Job Search Strategies: Over 100 Proven Strategies for Getting the Job You Want in Today's Challenging Market*. London: Piatkus.

# Exercises

1. Which of the following would describe you? Circle the relevant words. Some have been defined for you below.

Able to work alone	Aggressive	Ambitious	Analytical
Articulate <sup>9</sup>	Cheerful	Competent	Congenial <sup>10</sup>
Conscientious <sup>11</sup>	Cooperative	Courageous	Courteous <sup>12</sup>
Decisive	Dependable	Diplomatic	Discreet <sup>13</sup>
Emotionally stable	Efficient	Enthusiastic	Honest
Imaginative	Industrious <sup>14</sup>	Judicious <sup>15</sup>	Leader
Loyal	Observant	Open-minded	Orderly <sup>16</sup>
Patient	Studious	Watchful <sup>17</sup>	Zealous <sup>18</sup>

2. Complete these sentences, keeping in mind the kind of job you are interested in.

I want the employer to think that I can ...

I intend to demonstrate this by ...

3. Check the qualities you consider important for the types of positions you are interested in. Add other qualities you feel are relevant.

<input type="checkbox"/> initiative	<input type="checkbox"/> good at making suggestions	<input type="checkbox"/> quality results
<input type="checkbox"/> get the job done	<input type="checkbox"/> administrative skills	<input type="checkbox"/> energy
<input type="checkbox"/> good time management	<input type="checkbox"/> work well in a team	<input type="checkbox"/> leadership ability
<input type="checkbox"/> risk taker	<input type="checkbox"/> work well under pressure	<input type="checkbox"/> adaptability
<input type="checkbox"/> loyalty	<input type="checkbox"/> business savvy	<input type="checkbox"/> knowledgeable
<input type="checkbox"/> like challenge	<input type="checkbox"/> communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/> innovative

<sup>9</sup> Articulate: you can express ideas easily; you can give clear instructions

<sup>10</sup> Congenial: you can get along with others; you cheerfully serve on committees

<sup>11</sup> Conscientious: you do an honest day's work, including the unpleasant tasks

<sup>12</sup> Courteous: you treat others with respect and observe rules of social behaviour

<sup>13</sup> Discreet: you can keep a secret, protect confidential material and observe people's privacy

<sup>14</sup> Industrious: you are a self-starter, resist interruptions and get on with your tasks

<sup>15</sup> Judicious: you can make sound judgements, separating emotions from logic

<sup>16</sup> Orderly: you arrange things in a logical way and enjoy detail work

<sup>17</sup> Watchful: you keep an eye open for problems and look for ways to improve quality

<sup>18</sup> Zealous: you maintain a high level of energy and can share that energy with others

4. Add to this list of action verbs using words that relate to the type of job you are after.

manage	study	implement	programme	solve
develop	calculate	advise	improve	promote

5. Using relevant words from Exercise 4, write statements, which demonstrate your competencies for the type of job you are after.

e.g. I can manage product development teams.

e.g. I can speak fluent French.

a. I can

b. I can

c. I can

6. Use words from Exercise 4 to communicate your past accomplishments. Make sure these indicate how you will produce results in the future.

e.g. I have supervised a team of five accountants.

e.g. I have taught computer skills to many nationalities.

a. I have

b. I have

c. I have

7. Write down your achievements in the following areas. Note how they can provide evidence of how you will be able to succeed in the type of job you wish to obtain.

a. High school (best subjects, extra curricular activities, awards)

b. College (best subjects, extra curricular activities, awards)

c. Military service (activities, awards)

d. Community work (activities)

e. Hobbies and interests (sporting awards)

f. Employment (employer, position, achievements)

8. Use the following format to make your own outline of the points you want to include when telephoning prospective employers:

**Before the call:**

Who are you calling?

What do you want to happen as a result of this call?

What points do you plan to make about the value you offer?

How are you going to state your request to the employer?

**After the call:**

What were the results of the call?

What actions do you need to take next to further the relationship with this employer?

9. How would you respond to the following objections from an employer?

- a. "You're overqualified."
- b. "We were looking for someone a little older."
- c. "All hiring is done by Personnel."
- d. "We need someone with more experience."
- e. "We're cutting back right now. Why don't you call back in three months?"
- f. "We'll let you know in a few weeks."
- g. "I'll be on a business trip for the next two weeks."
- h. "The person in charge of hiring is not around."
- i. "We're looking for someone with more practical experience."
- j. "I'm tied up with meetings. Why don't you send your CV over?"
- k. "We're not hiring right now."
- l. "We are not equipped to take on students."

10. Remove redundancies from the following sentences. There could be more than one in each sentence. (They are not necessarily to do with job application.)

- a. I am really extremely happy to hear from you of my interview.
- b. I would like to know if your company regulations allow for paid compassionate leave of absence.
- c. I can wait for no longer than a maximum of ten days.
- d. Therefore, a salary raise is unfortunately not applicable in your case.
- e. You may be granted unpaid leave from duty.
- f. As a second alternative, you might like to accept next year's annual bonus in advance.
- g. I would be grateful if you could let me know which of these possibilities you would prefer.
- h. I look forward to a positive reply on your part.

11. Re-write the letter below. It is full of mistakes. (I actually received it from a Dutch medical student for correction. Names and addresses have been changed.)

Martijn van der Kerk  
Witstraat 39"  
1064 AA Amsterdam  
020-5555555  
The Netherlands

Professor Bill T. Northwind, Ph.D.  
(Professor and Vice Chairman of Surgery)  
T2/328 Clinical Science Center  
99 Black Street  
Tampa, FL 77898-2937  
United States of Amerika

Amsterdam 12, 1998

Dear Professor Bill T. Northwind, Ph.D. ,

It is at the advice of Mr. Ryan van Brug, M.D. from Utrecht (Academic Medical Center) that I write to you this letter.

At the University of Utrecht I am a medical student as well as a student of medical biology.

The study medical biologie implies the learning of a variety of research-technics ,which I am mainly master of. In both studies I am entering my final year now.

The reason I write you this letter is that as a part of my final year of my study medicine, I will have to do a scientific research. Which can be used (for a part) for my second study medical biologie also.

This research has to be done in an existing one and has to be accompanied by someone for a period of at least 17 weeks. At the end of the research I will have to write a report.

My interest mainly goes out to surgery and so I hope I can do something in this area of the medical science. Because Mr. van Brug thought you might be able to place me in a research (from April or May, maybe March 1998) he therefore adviced me to write to you. As I said earlier,the period must be 17 weeks or longer. It would be really terrific if you could have a place for me!

Hoping for a positive reply on your part,

Sincerely yours,

Martijn van der Kerk

# Answer Key

Exercises 1–8 are up to you.

9. Possible answers:

- a. I realise I have a higher level of education than other candidates, but I am very keen to get some practical experience at your company. I think I have a lot to offer.
- b. I am perhaps older than other candidates, but I am very keen. I think this position would provide me with the challenge I am looking for.
- c. Thank you, but I was wondering if I could perhaps ask you some questions about the position.
- d. I realise I don't have the experience you asked for in the advertisement, but I have got a very practically-oriented business degree and am extremely eager to learn.
- e. Could you give me the name of the person I should contact?
- f. Could you give me your telephone number so I could contact you then?
- g. Could you give me the name of someone else I could contact?
- h. Could I perhaps call him?
- i. I realise you are looking for someone with more practical experience, but I have studied at a very practically-oriented university.
- j. Thank you. Could you please give me your address then, and perhaps your telephone number so I can contact you at a later date.
- k. Okay, but I'm very enthusiastic about working at your company. Could I give you my CV in case any positions become available at a later date?
- l. I realise you may not be used to interns, but I think I could be very useful for the company and would not need much supervision.

10. Possible answers:

- a. I am happy to hear of my interview.
- b. I would like to know if company regulations allow for paid compassionate leave.
- c. I can wait for a maximum of ten days.
- d. Therefore, a salary raise is not applicable.
- e. You may be granted unpaid leave.
- f. As an alternative, you might like to accept next year's bonus in advance.
- g. I would be grateful if you could let me know which you would prefer.
- h. I look forward to a positive reply.

11. A possible letter follows. (The Dutch medical student got the internship in the US as a result.)

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Professor Bill T Northwind  
Professor and Vice Chairman of Surgery  
T2/328 Clinical Science Center  
99 Black Street  
Tampa FL 77898-2937  
United States of America

12 August 1998

Dear Professor Northwind,

This letter is written at the advice of Dr. Ryan van Brug of the Utrecht Academic Medical Center.

I am a student of Medicine and Medical Biology at the University of Utrecht. My main area of interest is surgery and part of my Medical Biology major involves the study of research techniques. To meet the requirements of my final year of study, it is my aim to join a research team for at least 17 weeks.

It would be greatly appreciated if I could write my final research report under your supervision. It would suit me to begin in March, April or May 1999.

I look forward to a positive reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. van der Kerk'.

Martijn van der Kerk

Enclosure: Curriculum Vitae

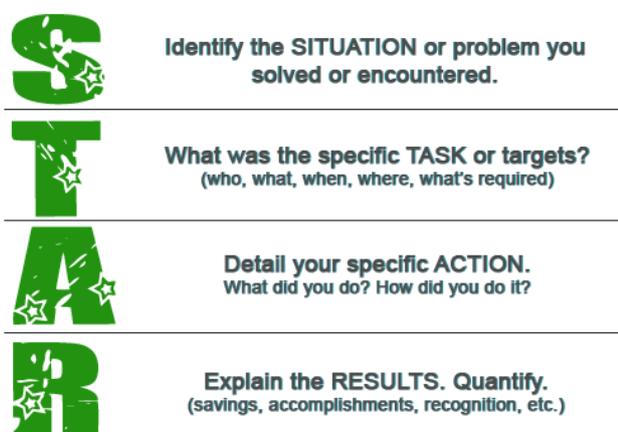
## How to Be a STAR Interviewer

Does the thought of behavioral-based interview questions make you sweat? Do you feel like your mind goes blank when someone asks you to provide an example of a time when you (\_\_fill in the blank\_\_) or do you feel like you miss opportunities to showcase yourself by responding with a 'yes' or 'no' when you had a great story about your work history that would have been more relevant?

Do you want the ability to go into an interview feeling confident about the experience and skills you have to share and have a meaningful way to communicate this?

While you may not have felt great about your past interview experiences, there's a simple acronym that can help you clear the fog of your memory, break down your responses into manageable parts and make you feel like the star of your next interview.

It's referred to as the STAR technique. And STAR stands for Situation, Task, Action, and Result.



By remembering this acronym, along with preparing a few examples of your past experience, you can impart meaningful, relevant information to the interviewer that sets you apart from other candidates.

But just knowing the acronym isn't enough. To use the STAR technique for answering interview questions, preparation and practice starts before the interview. Take some time to sit and jot down a few of your experiences and highlights from your work history that are relevant to the position you are interviewing for.

For example, if you are in sales, you might jot down how you were the top sales person 3 quarters in a row last year. Or if you work as an account manager, you may be proud that you stepped in and helped retain a struggling client by reworking an existing solution for them.

Choose situations that were challenges in your work history as well as those that focus on your accomplishments, and make sure you select a diverse set of illustrations of your experience. Then break each of these scenarios down using the STAR method.

First describe the 'Situation.' You are developing a context for the story you are telling the interviewer. Then explain the particular 'Task' or challenge that needed to be addressed. Outline what was expected of the situation and be sure to layout any conditions or constraints that arose.

Next, build on the scenario you've laid out by what 'Action' occurred on your part in response to the task or challenge. Don't be shy about including details like how you pulled together a team effort or what type of coordination the project took.

Finally, convey and quantify the 'Results' of your actions. How did your actions respond to the situation? What results did you achieve? Were there any significant takeaways from the experience? Were you recognized for your efforts?

You will find that your narrative style of responding to a question starts to feel like a story, and stories are easier for our brains to relate to and remember. This is good for both you and the interviewer.

Now that you've rehearsed and prepared these examples you can go into the interview with more confidence approaching each question. Even if a question is asked that one of your examples doesn't apply to, don't fret.

Because you've practiced how to break down and communicate your responses, take a moment to listen and understand the question. If you need a beat to think, feel free to paraphrase the question with the interviewer to ask if you understand it correctly.

Allow yourself a few seconds to bring an example to mind and organize it using the same STAR technique you practiced. Stick to the simple outline and structure of the STAR method. Resist the urge to include new details after the fact or to ramble.

Try to keep your responses brief; interview coaches vary their recommended times from 1-3 minutes for each response using the STAR method. If the interviewer has follow-up questions, these can now be confirmed with a more simple 'yes' or 'no' or a brief clarifying statement.

You no longer have to stumble through your next interview. Utilizing the STAR method, you can provide structured, well tailored responses to any difficult interview question in an easy, narrative fashion.

By showcasing your personal success stories using this technique, you will impress the interviewer with your ability to discuss your unique qualifications for the position and outshine your competition for the role. So show off your talents and experience in your next interview by being a STAR interviewer!

<http://www.interviewing.com/how-to-be-a-star-interviewer/>

## 5 Key Steps To A Cover Letter That Opens Doors

April 17, 2013 by Laura Smith-Proulx

So... you've created a knockout resume, and you're ready to wow employers by sending it directly to them. Don't forget to send it under cover—a powerful [cover letter](#), that is.

While a great resume can open doors, a compelling cover letter can be an equal (if not MORE) important part of your pitch for employment.

In fact, some surveys of HR professionals and recruiters have suggested the cover letter—instead of the resume—is what really gets read!

That's right! The interviewing decision may actually rest on how well-written and concise your letter appears... and the irony is you may never find out whether it was the resume OR the cover letter that swayed an employer.

Even if cover letter writing isn't your style, don't panic! Read on for five strategies that can help even a novice letter writer create a memorable introduction to capture an employer's attention:

### 1. Ensure Your Letter Matches Your Resume In Presentation And Style

Start by copying the name and address header information from your resume to a blank document. Next, check the margins on each document to ensure they match.

Be sure to use the same font as your resume, in order to give your application a professional “package” look. In addition, don't suddenly switch fonts or font sizes in the midst of the letter itself.

With this type of presentation, hiring authorities can match your resume to the letter-plus, doing so helps to put your best professional foot forward.

### 2. Find Out The Hiring Manager's Name Before Sending Your Application

Skip, “Dear Sir” by finding out exactly who is behind the open position. This is where your Internet research skills will come in very handy.

Sites such as LinkedIn or Zoominfo.com are great resources for job hunters who want to find company insiders.

In addition, you might be able to call the company and ask who the hiring manager is for the open position, or use your network to learn the names of managers at the company.

If you can't find out the name, “Dear Hiring Manager” is most appropriate. Skip, “To Whom it May Concern”—or it won't concern anyone!

### 3. Keep In Mind The Purpose Of The Letter Is To Gain Attention

Your first paragraph should therefore skip mundane details and get right to the point. Aim for an opening sentence that states your main qualifications, plus your objective, all in one shot.

For example, a cover letter for a Sales Manager might begin with:

*With a strong background closing contracts in excess of \$1 million at Fortune 500 corporations, I am confident that I can exceed your expectations in the role of Sales Executive.*

Conversely, an Operations Director might use the following:

*As an operational executive focused on delivering the highest levels of quality, I have helped global organizations achieve their profit goals by leading large teams to achieve infrastructure*

*improvement and maintain cost control. These qualifications have prompted my application to your company for the position of Operations Director.*

#### **4. Don't Repeat Everything In Your Resume**

Even though you've put a lot of effort into your resume, it's still best to resist the temptation to repeat all that great information.

You'll capture more interest by restating your main points, allowing the reader to see how you will **succeed in the new job**.

I recommend adding a bullet-point list of your relevant qualities and achievements, keeping it to a maximum of five critical points. Preface it with "Representative skills that make my background ideal for this position include..." to give the employer a quick snapshot of your fitness for the job.

Still stumped for ideas? Try to answer the classic "Why should we hire you?" question, and you'll be able to state your case much more succinctly.

#### **5. Limit The Number Of Sentences Beginning With "I"**

Focusing on the job and the employer's requirements are key strategies for a great introduction. One of the best ways to do this is to refrain from using first person references at the beginning of your sentences.

Why is this so important? Employers are hiring a solution to their business problems when they bring you on board, and this means focusing on their requirements is a key step.

Think about it this way: when you create a verbal picture of what you can achieve, it rarely starts with "I"—and structuring your thoughts this way can help reinforce your emphasis on the company's needs.

The following example illustrate this point:

*Given your needs for a proven sales performer open to new challenges in the medical device industry, we should talk further about my record of success in territory expansion.*

In summary, don't forget to create a strong cover letter as part of your job hunting strategy. You'll find that a personal, yet powerful, introduction to your skills might be all you need to access more **interviews**.

Read more at <http://www.careerealism.com/cover-letter-opens-doors/#uSGczGZ7DyAwU5vs.99>