

Writing an Effective Cover Letter or Letter of Application

A cover letter is your chance to make a good first impression. Because it accompanies your resume and application to the school district or educational institution, it is often the first opportunity to introduce yourself as well as an indication of your written communication skills.

Having put a lot of hard work into a resume you want to make sure that the prospective employer reads it carefully. A cover letter is a marketing tool that you develop to encourage employers to study your resume and give you serious consideration as a candidate. Together, they should stimulate the employer to want to know more about you through an interview.

Just like the resume, **the cover letter should be tailored to the specific position about which you are inquiring or for which you are applying.** Never send a form letter. Certainly there will be some common things you mention in each letter, but the wise cover letter writer will personalize it as much as possible.

In general, **a professional cover letter is:**

1. Formal and businesslike
2. Neat
3. Short (3 or 4 paragraphs on one page)
4. Typed or computer generated
5. Errorless (spelling, grammar, punctuation)
6. On good quality bond paper or in PDF form for electronic applications, if able, ensuring that your format will remain consistent
7. Addressed to a specific person, whenever possible

Two basic uses for cover letters:

1. **Letter of Inquiry** - when you have an interest in a school district but are not aware whether an opening exists for which you are qualified. Many districts and educational institutions will then note your interest and place your letter (and resume and application) in their systems for future consideration when openings arise.
2. **Letter of Application or Cover Letter**- when there is a specific opening for which you are qualified and wish to apply.

Teacher Education Cover Letter Guide

A cover letter is a professional letter that “covers” or accompanies your résumé. The purpose of a cover letter is to persuade the reader you are worth an interview. It is a chance to sell how your unique skills and experiences can benefit the district/organization.

Formatting Tips

- **Length:** A cover letter is typically 3-4 paragraphs, not exceeding one page.
- **Format:** Use the same heading, font style and size, and type of paper as your résumé.
- **Structure:** Do not overuse the pronoun “I” at the beginning of sentences. Vary your sentence structure.

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Content

Before writing, first research information about the job and the school so you can address key points and needs related to the position, school and district. Next, reflect on your own qualifications and skills and select three that most closely fit the requirements of the position and/or the needs of the school and district.

Salutation

Address your cover letter to a specific person, if possible. Call for the name of the hiring manager if not listed, unless the job description says “Please no phone calls.” Never use “To Whom It May Concern.” If a name is unavailable, use a title (e.g., Dear Administrator).

Body

First paragraph

The purpose of this paragraph is to gain and keep the reader’s attention.

- Include company information found through research.
- State the reason you are writing the letter, identifying the position you are applying for or inquiring about.
- Indicate the source of referral, if any.
- End this paragraph with three qualifications/skills demonstrating why you are the most qualified candidate.

Middle paragraph(s)

The purpose of this paragraph is to emphasize what you can contribute to the organization.

- Give concrete examples of the skills you listed in the first paragraph.
- This will be the biggest part of your letter and may be one or two paragraphs.

Final paragraph

The purpose of this paragraph is to wrap up your letter.

- Reiterate your interest in the position.
- State your appreciation of the employer’s consideration.
- Include your intentions for follow-up.
- Phone number/email and best way to contact you.

Closing

End your cover letter professionally (e.g. Respectfully, Sincerely, Regards, etc.). Leave four spaces, then type your name. If mailing in a hard copy, sign your name in the open space. If submitting your material electronically, either include your electronic signature or type “submitted electronically” under your typed name.

COVER LETTER CHECKLIST

Five Second Review: Give it the once-over; is your cover letter:

- Free of typos and spelling errors?
- Proofread by someone for grammatical and punctuation errors?
- Typed in the same font and on same color paper as your resume?
- Organized and prioritized?
- Full of action verbs describing experience, skills, and knowledge?
- Specifically addressing the person in charge of hiring for the job, using a colon or comma after the person's name?
- Signed personally by you in blue or black ink?

Fifteen Minute Review: After further reflection, does your cover letter:

- State specifically the job title for which you are applying?
- State specifically how you found out about the job posting?
- Specifically address qualifications listed in the job announcement or list any qualifications you have if this is a letter of inquiry?
- Emphasize internships, relevant job experience, relevant coursework, or professional society activities?
- Show your enthusiasm in wanting the position for which you are applying?
- Stay away from statements such as “I feel”, “I think”, and “I believe”?
- Describe your personal attributes that would relate to company culture or how you would fit in the organization?
- Address any names of people who referred you?
- Have the appropriate number of paragraphs (3-5)?
- State interest in scheduling an interview with a company representative?
- Provide your contact information, i.e., phone and email?
- Thank the employer for his/her time and consideration.

Cover Letter/Letter of Application Sample Layout

Your Street
City, State, Zip Code

Date
[3 spaces]

Name of Individual
Title of Individual
Name of Employer
Street Address or PO Box Number City, State, Zip
Code
[1 space]

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. _____: [1 space]

Opening Paragraph. Attract attention. Clearly state the reason for writing, naming the position or type of work for which you are applying. Identify how you heard of the opening or how the employer's name was obtained (i.e., the Career Services Center informed me of your opening or Professor Smith in the Technology Department at Western Washington University recommended that I contact you.)
[1 space]

Second Paragraph. State your reason for writing this particular employer. Specify concrete reasons for the type of work you desire. Highlight: **your skills**; your goals; and/or how your education, experiences and other qualifications support your capacity to succeed in this job (in this organization.) **"Show your Stuff!"**
Describe what you can do for the employer rather than what the employer can do for you. Significant accomplishments can be noted, but the resume should not be repeated any more than absolutely necessary. Basically, you are emphasizing your key qualifications -- selling yourself -- elaborating on background areas which will attract the employer for the specific career field or job you want.
[1 space]

Closing Paragraph. Restate your interest by indicating your availability for a personal interview. Either suggest a time or state your willingness to come at the convenience of the individual employer. End on a strong note. Indicate your resume is enclosed (and your placement file has been forwarded-if appropriate).
[1 space]

Sincerely yours, [3 spaces]
(Signature)

Full Name Typed or use digital signature [1 space]
Enclosure(s)

COVER LETTER EXAMPLE 1: Public School

Elaine C. Kwan

310 East Market Street

Tiffin, OH 44883

(123) 456-7890

Ekwan777@yahoo.com

June 1, 2008

Ms. Nancy Johnson, Principal
East Side City Schools
222 East Street
East Side City, OH 12345-6789

Dear Ms. Johnson,

Enclosed are my application materials for the High School English teaching position at East Side City Schools. This May completed my Bachelor of Arts in English from Heidelberg College, and received Ohio Licensure in AYA Language Arts (grades 7 -12). Last fall I completed my student teaching in your district at Pleasant Valley Middle School, and enjoyed a wonderful experience with students in several English Literature and Writing classes. I also appreciated the professionalism and caring attitude of the teachers and staff.

During my various field experiences, I worked with students at all levels, including 9th grade remedial Language Arts and AP English. This included providing individual, small group and whole class instruction to students with learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and multiple disabilities. I value individuality, and strive to meet the needs of each student. To accomplish this, I use a variety of hands-on activities and different teaching strategies to accommodate diverse learning styles. A few of my students favorites include my "Recycle Your Essay" competition and "Rule or No Rule", a grammar game based on a popular TV show. I also recognize the importance of trust, and successfully established relationships with students that resulted in a safe, comfortable, challenging, learning environment.

For the last four summers I worked with children ages 8-12 in a local summer tutoring program. As a Group Coordinator, I supervised a team of 10 colleagues, participated in leadership training and crisis management, and was indirectly responsible for the instruction of 100+ students. Through this experience, I gained valuable group management skills and developed positive relationships with youth in the program, detailing just a few of the skills I can contribute at East Side City Schools.

Thank you for your time and consideration. You will find my resume, a copy of my transcript, a writing sample, and reference letters enclosed. I will follow up with you concerning the High School English Teaching Position within 2 weeks.

Sincerely,

Elaine C. Kwan

Elaine C. Kwan

COVER LETTER EXAMPLE 2: Private School

Heather E. Koach

6868 Lake Park Road Ashland, Montana 54806 715-292-0123 heather.koach@ms.edu

April 1, 2012

John Smith, Ph.D. Principal
Elite Academy
610 Maryhill Drive
Collark, MT 54303

Dear Dr. John Smith,

"A good teacher is like a candle - it consumes itself to light the way for others" - Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. I strongly consider teachers to be both the guidance and models for student success. As an excited candidate, I am writing in regards to the English/Language Arts position available at Elite Academy. I learned about the position from the Elite Academy school website and could not be more excited about the opening. I am a Montana State senior graduating in May with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English and a certification in Early Adolescence – Adolescence Education. I believe the school's mission to build a well-rounded student is an essential part of a students' education. I would be a great fit and asset to both your school and faculty, as this job opportunity would accentuate the technological skills, desire, and drive I possess as an educator.

Throughout my extensive experience in the classroom, I've strengthened my ability to integrate technology in a positive way, which enhances student learning. For example, during my student teaching experience one of my unit plans on informational texts incorporated the use of MacBook Pro computers and the program iWeb, which allowed students to create their own websites. In taking the lead on this project, I collaborated with other teachers and community members to successfully implement this authentic activity. At the end of my placement, when surveyed, students indicated this activity as their favorite because of its integration of their interests and learning all in one. Another asset I offer is my experience with the International Baccalaureate program. I had the opportunity to observe and help facilitate an 11th grade Theory of Knowledge class where students questioned the basis of knowledge while critically analyzing evidence.

Lastly, as a new teacher I have been trained to use the Common Core Standards as a focal point for my unit plans. In using these standards to build objectives and facilitate student learning, I've also helped students reach their goals through differentiation. In my 8th grade placement at Washington Middle School, I created a guided reading group unit plan that focused on the different levels of student reading and comprehension. Students were placed in groups that concentrated on leveled reading, learning, and comprehension to ensure each of my students learning needs were met.

My experience with technology, the International Baccalaureate program, and the Common Core Standards with differentiation among other skills and strengths, make me a very qualified candidate for this position. I will be following up with you the week of April 12th to make sure you received all materials needed for this position. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at (715) 292-0485 or heather.koach@snc.edu. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Heather E. Koach

COVER LETTER EXAMPLE 3: Religious School

April 11, 2012
John Razer, Ph.D.
St. Mary's Catholic H.S.
112 Cotton Drive
Green Bay, WI 54303

Dear Dr. Razer:

As someone whose life has been shaped by Catholic education, I am thrilled to learn of your open position for an English teacher. In May, I will graduate from St. Norbert College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and an Early Adolescence-Adolescence certification. My pre-service teaching experiences, including sophomore block with Jan Theyer, have shown me that St. Mary's Catholic High School provides a nurturing environment dedicated to the growth of each individual student. As a student-centered educator who shares your values, I would be a proud and dedicated member of your learning community.

My strengths as a student-centered educator include holistically educating my students and differentiating to meet their individual needs. At St. Matthew School, I spiritually, academically, and personally educated my eighth graders most significantly through a cross-discipline unit, The Saints. Students' objectives included following a research process, creating a final presentation, and connecting personally and spiritually with their saint. I differentiated by providing student choice in their research and final project, which also motivated the students. For my Jewish student, I differentiated further, collaborating with his family to find a saint who has made an impact in the Jewish community. In the end, students were visibly proud and knowledgeable of their learning, sharing their projects with the church community after mass.

I have also used technology to enhance students' understanding of literature. The setting and ornamental language of *The Scarlet Letter* can alienate modern readers, so my Honors American Literature students at De Pere High School previewed recent films and music that refer to the novel. The students also explored the historical setting of the Puritans through a website and webquest I created (which Mrs. Thillman continues to use in her classroom). Online chats supplemented the verbal class discussions and gave me an outlet to assess my more reserved students. These forms of technology raised students' interest in the text and increased their understanding of the themes of the novel, as they align with the Common Core Standards.

As an educator who already shares your values, I would be a dedicated English teacher in your learning community. Please feel free to discuss my interest in the position further by phone at (920) 619-3408 or by email at jose.kornido@snc.edu. I will follow up the week of April 29 to discuss any questions you may have about my qualifications. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to communicating with you.

Sincerely,

Jose Kornido
Enclosure: Resume & References

THE RESUME

The purpose of a resume is to market yourself for the next position you desire. The resume should be short and concise, presenting an employer with information pertinent to the job announcement in a brief, easy-to read format.

One page is usually sufficient for new college graduates with limited work histories, but experienced individuals may need two pages.



A variety of formats can be used for resumes. However, in our experience with university students and other job seekers, we have found that the chronological format generally works the most effectively. This approach operates on the assumption that your most recent experience is the most relevant. Consequently, information concerning your education and experience is presented in reverse date order. The information which follows details the elements that are typically included in a chronological resume.

THE BASIC ELEMENTS

There is no one correct way to write a resume. However, there are some basic elements you need to include in your resume:

- 1) **Identifying Information**--The very first information on your resume should be your name, address and phone number (and/or message phone number, if applicable), including both zip and area codes. You may also include a website address, if you have one. Your main objective is to get employers to remember you, so highlighting your name using bolding, caps or a larger font will make you more visible.
- 2) **Career Objective**--For application to a specific job, an objective is usually not necessary. An objective may be appropriate at a career fair or to designate specific skills/endorsements that you wish to use. It should be a very specific statement about the type of position you are seeking and/or the skills you wish to use. If you plan to explore a variety of different opportunities, you will probably be better off using your cover letter to explain the type of position you are seeking so that you can tailor your statement to the particular organization you are contacting.
- 3) **Certification**--This is the area separate from and above the Education section. It details the type of certificate (i.e.: Washington State Residency Certificate) and the date issued or anticipated. Endorsements and Most Highly Qualified designations are also included in this section.
- 4) **Educational Background**--With emphasis on the highest education level attained, list your college experience including name and location of institutions attended, degrees/certificates earned or to be granted, major, special coursework, and dates of completion. You may also want to list any outside training you have received (such as special workshops or seminars) which is pertinent to your career objectives. For new

graduates this section is placed before the experience sections. As more experience is gained the education section may be moved farther down the page. When writing your resume you always want to “put your best foot forward” by arranging the information presented in order of importance.

- 5) **Teaching Related Experience**--List in reverse chronological order the experiences you have had which directly relate to teaching, working and/or volunteering with children. Include subheadings such as Teacher, Substitute Teacher, Student Teacher, Practica, Tutor and Camp Counselor. The experiences most directly



relevant to the position for which you are applying should be emphasized. Typically, those would be student teaching and substituting for the entry level teacher and contracted experiences for veteran teachers.

In highlighting your experiences, include only the information that would be relevant to the position you seek. Be sure to use language which indicates you are current with curricular, instructional and philosophical trends in your field. At the same time, the resume should not appear verbose or full of clichés. Using brief examples is a way to build a positive image in the mind of the resume reader.

- 6) **Other Experience**--At this point, you will need to make a judgment call on how specifically you will list your current and former employment. For the candidate, **Teaching Related Experience** is often the strongest statement one can make. However, prospective employers can learn many positive things about a candidate from other employment as well. If you have been in the work force, you have no doubt gained a number of transferable skills which will assist you in the classroom. In addition, your work history before and during college may leave a positive impression of someone who is energetic, ambitious and willing to work hard to reach his/her goals.

This information will be listed as in the previous section with **job title, employer, location** and **dates of employment** followed by a brief description using active verbs of relevant skills utilized in performance of the position. It is not necessary to include all of your work experience. Unrelated, extremely dated employment or jobs of brief duration need not be included. Do not discount summer, part-time and volunteer positions, however. It may be appropriate for some candidates to simply list other experiences without bullet point descriptions if most of the relevant experience is teaching related.

- 7) **Key Qualifications** (Optional)--Alternate titles include Skills Summary, Strengths Profile or Summary of Qualifications. The idea here is to highlight your qualifications for the type of position you are seeking. Typically this section is arranged as a list of 6 to 8 bullet points listing skills, areas of expertise and/or personal characteristics, each described in just a few words. Every item included should relate in an obvious way to

the job announcement or to the type of position you are seeking. The beauty of this section is that you can draw from the full range of your experiences to date--education, volunteer work, employment, campus activities, etc. Just be sure that the rest of your resume supports the claims you make here. This section may appear before the education section or before the relevant experience section or later in the resume depending on how important the information is (for instance, fluency in a foreign language or training in a highly desired area could be emphasized in this section).

- 8) **Activities/Honors/Memberships** (Optional)--Choose the heading that is most appropriate for your particular background. List academic honors, extracurricular activities and memberships in this section, placing a special emphasis on those things that relate closely to your career goals.
- 9) **Community Activities** (Optional)--Employers like to learn a little bit about the person behind the resume. Information about your hobbies and interests will provide some insight into your character and personality and may include pertinent information that would not appear anywhere else in your resume. Steer clear of information on things like age, marital status, height and weight. Under Affirmative Action/EEO guidelines, employers are not to use this type of information in their hiring procedures. As noted above, if you have gained significant experience from other activities, they may fit better in your earlier "Experience" section than here.

SAYING WHAT YOU MEAN AND MEANING WHAT YOU SAY

Once you know what information should be included in your resume and how to arrange it, you are ready to sit down and put the words on paper that will most effectively communicate to an employer what you have to offer. No small task! As with any piece of writing, you need to be as concise as possible and your choice of words is extremely important. Pronouns such as "I", "they" and "he" or "she" are never used, and articles are usually dropped (i.e. "a", "an", "the"). This will put the emphasis on your choice of verbs. Choose carefully! Where "attended" sounds weak and somewhat vague, "participated actively" sounds dynamic and results-oriented. Watch your use of adjectives and adverbs as well. "Responded promptly to customer inquiries" sounds better than just "responded." The action verbs and adjectives on the next pages will help you make the most appropriate word selections to put some punch in your resume. A worksheet to assist you in writing excellent experience bullet points is included. While it may feel uncomfortable to brag, this is a time when it's not only okay, but necessary, to toot your own horn, so go for it!

ACTION VERBS

TEACHING SKILLS

adapted	defined	facilitated	presented
advised	developed	guided	set goals
clarified	enabled	informed	stimulated
coached	encouraged	initiated	taught
collaborated	established	instructed	trained
communicated	evaluated	lectured	updated
coordinated	explained	persuaded	

ADMINISTRATIVE or MANAGEMENT SKILLS

acquired	coordinated	improved	prioritized
administered	delegated	increased	produced
analyzed	developed	managed	recommended
assigned	directed	maximized	scheduled
attained	eliminated	minimized	streamlined
chaired	evaluated	obtained	strengthened
conserved	exceeded	organized	supervised
consolidated	expanded	oversaw	
contracted	headed	planned	

CLERICAL OR DETAIL SKILLS

achieved	dispatched	monitored	retrieved
approved	documented	operated	screened
arranged	executed	organized	specified
catalogued	gathered	prepared	systematized
classified	generated	processed	tabulated
collected	implemented	purchased	validated
compiled	inspected	recorded	

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

addressed	directed	moderated	reported
arbitrated	drafted	motivated	researched
arranged	edited	negotiated	responded
authored	enlisted	persuaded	solicited
communicated	formulated	promoted	spoke
cooperated	influenced	publicized	summarized
corresponded	interpreted	reconciled	translated
defined	lectured	recruited	verified
developed	mediated	renegotiated	wrote

CREATIVE SKILLS

acted			
applied	established	integrated	planned
composed	evaluated	introduced	presented
conceived	fashioned	invented	produced
conceptualized	formed	loaded	proposed
created	formulated	molded	refined
designed	founded	originated	revamped
developed	illustrated	perceived	revitalized
directed	instituted	performed	shaped

FINANCIAL SKILLS

allocated	budgeted	estimated	planned
appraised	calculated	forecast	researched
audited	computed	marketed	sold
balanced	developed	projected	

HELPING SKILLS

advocated	coached	educated	guided
aided	contributed	expedited	referred
assessed	counseled	facilitated	rehabilitated
assisted	demonstrated	familiarized	represented
clarified	diagnosed	fostered	supported

RESEARCH SKILLS

abstracted	discovered	inspected	reviewed
clarified	evaluated	interpreted	summarized
collected	examined	interviewed	surveyed
critiqued	extracted	investigated	
diagnosed	identified	organized	

TECHNICAL SKILLS

analyzed	designed	maintained	repaired
assembled	devised	operated	solved
built	engineered	overhauled	trained
calculated	fabricated	programmed	upgraded
computed	inspected	remodeled	

ADJECTIVES

active	energetic	personable
adaptable	enterprising	poised
adept	enthusiastic	positive
aggressive	exceptional	practical
analytical	experienced	productive
assertive	fair	receptive
broad-minded	firm	reliable
committed	honest	resilient
competent	independent	resourceful
confident	innovative	self-reliant
conscientious	instrumental	self-starter
creative	keen	sensitive
culturally aware	logical	sharp
dedicated	loyal	sincere
dependable	mature	socially responsible
determined	methodical	successful
diligent	motivated	strong
diplomatic	objective	tactful
disciplined	open-minded	team-oriented
effective	organized	
efficient	outgoing	

TEACHING RESUME CHECKLIST

FIVE SECOND REVIEW: *Is your resume inviting or scary?*

- o It is neat, clean and pleasing to the eye
- o White space—not too much or too little
- o Even margins—not too narrow or too wide
- o It is on nice paper—white or neutral light shade

FIVE MINUTE REVIEW: *Does the information you included invite the reader to learn more?*

OVERALL:

- o 1 inch margins on top, bottom and sides. Left and right margins can be $\frac{3}{4}$ inch at the smallest
- o 11 to 12 point type—Arial or other sans serif type is clearest for smaller than 12 point
- o Consistent headings, bold use, punctuation and spacing
- o Typestyle is consistent and not mixed with another
- o Format, your choice, but easy to read and consistent
- o No errors or misspellings
- o No artwork, fancy type or colored ink
- o 1 page is not always the rule: sometimes more detail is good—make it relevant

HEADINGS:

- o *Certification, Education and Relevant Teaching Experience* (or similar, in order)
- o Other possible headings of: Honors, Awards, Affiliations, Key Qualifications, Multicultural Experience or Other Work Experience (Other headings that describe and market YOU!)
- o In general, no references or objectives on page (exception might be for career fair)

CONTENT:

- o Begin with verb, present tense for now, or past tense (“I” is implied)
- o Include information relevant to position that highlights skills you have
- o Demonstrate proficiency with specific information
- o Include information on areas of interest to school districts such as languages, diversity experience, flexibility, classroom management, use of assessment to inform instruction, Common Core and other standards, teamwork, and communication with parents, co-workers and students—use job announcement as guide
- o Make it easy for the employer to see how you meet the specific job requirements/qualifications
- o Describe your experience, skills and knowledge related to the job
- o Include unpaid & paid volunteer, internship and classroom experiences
- o Include details that make you stand out from other applicants
- o Avoid using personal pronouns & eliminate articles (“a”, “an” & “the”)
- o Avoid jargon & abbreviations (exception states) not commonly understood

Justine E. Kaplan

847 N. Riverview Dr. • De Pere, WI • (920) 451-5425 • justine.kaplan@snc.edu

OBJECTIVE

Desire to be a high school English teacher who educates and values the whole student, making learning accessible. Guide students' independent learning, critical thinking, and self-expression through language arts.

EDUCATION

St. Norbert College, De Pere, Wisconsin

Bachelor of Arts Degree in English

GPA: 3.88/4.00

May 2012

Certification: Early Adolescence – Adolescence

STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Student Teacher, De Pere High School, De Pere, WI

Nov 2011 – Jan 2012

Taught Honors American Literature and an expository writing course, Advanced Composition

- Collaborated with staff for common assessments that met the Common Core standards
- Utilized assistance from counselors and ESL assistants to meet the needs of my students
- Enhanced learning through technology with chats, surveys, and additional resources
- Facilitated students publishing their written work in an electronic portfolio
- Coached students' individual writing needs through written and verbal feedback
- Guided students through the writing stages with examples and empathy
- Connected AP literary terms to students' observations and understandings of a text
- Observed non-traditional classrooms, such as team-taught and single gender
- Developed first-year students' time management and study skills in resource period

Student Teacher, *St. Matthew School*, Green Bay, WI

Aug – Nov 2011

Taught language arts, literature, and Catholic religion classes to seventh and eighth graders

- Assessed students' learning with cooperative grouping and technology-based projects
- Modified assignments and exams based upon IEP and RTI support staff guidance
- Created a website and webquest guide to enhance students' historical background knowledge
- Led and participated with the eighth grade students at an overnight team-building camp
- Collaborated with faculty and staff in school-wide projects, duties, and professional development
- Communicated with families through a blog, conferences, and attending school events
- Used creative writing projects to enhance students' understanding of literature
- Obtained a real audience for the students' persuasive debate
- Created five units: suspense, persuasion, early American writers, *The Giver*, and saints

ADDITIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Summer Camp Teacher *Salvation Army Camp Hope*, Green Bay, WI

Summer 2011

- Designed and implemented healthy lifestyle education for 7-12 year olds
- Created a safe, positive environment for at-risk youth in and out of the classroom
- Organized and collected assessment data for grant applications
- Became certified in First Aid and CPR

Classroom Co-Teacher/Aide *Wisconsin International School*, De Pere, WI

Seasonal 2008-2011

- Co-taught and developed a summer reading course
- Led a leveled reading group in a 4th/5th combined classroom
- Facilitated the writing and production of a student-led play

Certified Tutor *College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA)*, De Pere, WI Spring 2009-2011

- Helped students achieve academic autonomy through effective writing and study strategies
- Received training about sleep and time management, test anxiety, cultural diversity, and learning disabilities in the realm of education

Pre-service Teacher *Washington Middle School*, Green Bay, WI Spring 2010

- Team-taught a classroom of sixth graders, some with special needs
- Implemented cooperative grouping, writing, and hands-on activities
- Collaborated with fellow pre-service teachers to develop and use a backwards design unit

ESL Tutor/Conversation Partner *ESL Institute, St. Norbert College*, De Pere, WI 2009-2010

- Assisted college students learning English with writing and reading comprehension
- Gained an understanding of reading, writing, and cultural practices around the world

Pre-service Teacher *Notre Dame Academy*, Green Bay, WI Fall 2009

- Developed a website to enrich students' understanding of a novel
- Developed lesson plans for sophomore and honors sophomore English classes
- Connected a literary genre to popular music and lyrics

Individual Tutor *Phantom Knight School of Opportunity*, De Pere, WI Fall 2009

- Counseled an at-risk adolescent with goal setting and study skills
- Experienced a project-based learning environment

EXTRACURRICULAR EXPERIENCE

Writing Groups

- Co-supervisor of De Pere High School creative writing group Writer's Guild Fall 2011

Journalism

- Co-supervisor of the Notre Dame Academy student newspaper Fall 2009
- Chief Copy Editor for the St. Norbert College student-led newspaper Fall 2009
- Copy Editor for the St. Norbert College student-led newspaper Spring 2009

Reading Groups

- Created and implemented reading group activities at St. Matthew School
- Co-teacher of an early adolescent summer school reading course Summer 2009

Tennis

- Co-captain and varsity player in high school

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2012 Student Wisconsin Education Association (WEA) Professional Development Seminar

- Sessions in classroom management and PDP development

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Dean's List
- Bob and Bonnie Kaftan 2011 Scholarship recipient for academics
- Educational Testing Service (ETS) Recognition of Excellence on the Praxis II exam
- Catherine Schmitz Jacobs Secondary Education Award Recipient for excellence
- Trustees Distinguished Scholarship award for academics

Kyle E. Easton

6897 Nickle Place De Pere, WI 54115 • (920) 941-5643 • kyle.easton@snc.edu

OBJECTIVE

Seeking a high school or middle school English teaching position. Offering an excellent work ethic, a strong background in English language and literature, and a passion for working with children. Extremely driven and committed to helping children reach their full potential.

EDUCATION

St. Norbert College De Pere, WI

Bachelor of Arts Degree May 2012

Major: English

GPA: 3.93/4.0

Certification: Early Adolescence/Adolescence (Secondary Education)

STUDY ABROAD

University College Cork- Cork, Ireland

Jan 2011-May 2011

- Participated in a study abroad program with a focus on Irish culture, literature, and language
- Achieved independence and cultural awareness through traveling alone and encountering people with diverse backgrounds

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Student Teacher, *Pulaski Community Middle School*

March 2012-June 2012

Student Teacher, *Seymour High School*

Jan 2012-March 2012

- Developed a high school English non-fiction unit for sophomores with a focus on making claims and citing evidence
- Evaluated students' written work and provided detailed feedback on how to improve writing, particularly through the use of literary elements (e.g., metaphor, simile)
- Encouraged students in their writing and reading through one-on-one discussion

Junior Block Experience, *Washington Middle School* Green Bay, WI

Sept 2010-Dec 2010

- Created a team-taught unit on global culture, as well as culture specifically represented in the classroom, by addressing students' interest in sports, dance, and literature
- Interacted with students to establish awareness on individual background
- Incorporated technology and diverse learning methods into the classroom through iPad and PowerPoint

Sophomore Block Experience

Jan 2010-May 2010

Notre Dame Academy Green Bay, WI

- Learned classroom management techniques from observing professional teacher
- Developed lesson plans that engaged students in analytical discussion of American text

Phantom Knight School of Opportunity De Pere, WI

- Tutored high risk high school students and encouraged them to put forth effort
- Engaged students in alternative learning methods through discussion, art, and technology

EDUCATION-RELATED EXPERIENCE

AVID—Advancement Via Individual Determination Pen Pal

Oct 2011-Present

- Garner local high school student's interest in the power and importance of higher education
- Articulate the college experience and offer advice on how to achieve their goals

Writing Center Consultant, *St. Norbert College*

Sept 2010- Present

- Assist students in formulating and articulating ideas in their writing
- Edit for grammar and spelling mistakes and explain the reasoning behind the rules

VIRTUS Training

Spring 2010

- Acquired the knowledge of how to proactively respond to and prevent child abuse

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Mentor, *Big Brother Big Sister Program*, Green Bay, WI

Aug 2011-Present

- Plan and organize activities to engage youth's interests
- Contribute to increasing youth's self confidence by exposing her to new situations

T.R.I.P.S.—Turning Responsibility into Powerful Service

Sept 2009-April 2010

- Experienced rural poverty in the Appalachian region, working with the Christian Appalachian Project
- Worked with a team to provide adequate housing through manual labor
- Obtained a new understanding of different education systems in the United States

AWARDS AND HONORS

St. Norbert College Dean's List

L.E.A.D. Award—Leader in Excellent Attitudes and Dispositions

- Selected by Education faculty

COMPUTER AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

- Successfully incorporated Smart Board technology into daily lessons through allowing students a different medium for presentations and interacting with content specific documents
- Accomplished and efficient in Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Google Docs

ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Assembly Line Worker, *Ellien's Candies*

2009-2011

Tot Spot Attendant, Cashier, Bagger; *Festival Foods Grocery Store*

2007-2008

Server, *Zesty's Frozen Custard and Grill*

Summer 2006

General Teacher Interview Questions

Assessment Questions

1. Give me an example of a performance assessment.
2. Explain how you use assessments as a way to improve student learning ([click here to read a possible response](#)).
3. What methods have you used or would you use to assess student learning?
4. What standards of measure will you use to assess your students? Will you use state, national, or local standards?
5. Other than tests, how do you assess student learning?
6. How do you prepare your students for standardized tests?

Background Questions

1. Why did you become a teacher?
2. Are you a risk taker? (Give an example.)
3. Are you a positive and energetic person? (Give an example to back up your answer.)
4. Tell me about yourself. ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
5. Are you an empathetic person? Give an example.
6. How can you tell that a person is a good listener?
7. Are you an objective person? Give an example.
8. What motivates you?
9. What do you want to do with your life?
10. What was the most frustrating thing that happened to you as a student teacher?
11. What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
12. What is the role of the principal? Does a conflict exist between your perception of a principal's role and his/her role as your evaluator?
13. Describe your student teaching experience.
14. During your student teaching, were you ever involved with a situation at school involving racial tension? If so, how did you handle it?
15. What subjects have you taught?
16. Are you patient? Give an example.
17. Do you ever feel angry towards your students?
18. What is your [educational philosophy](#)? ([click here to read a possible response, an excerpt from Road to Teaching](#))
19. If you could create the ideal school, what would it be like?
20. Do you like to be challenged? (Give an example to back up your answer.)
21. What do you like most/dislike most about teaching?
22. How do your life experiences prepare you for teaching?
23. What teams and/or clubs did you belong to as a student?
24. What activities would you coach or advise as a member of this staff?
25. Why did you choose to be a teacher? ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
26. What do you like most about a teaching career?
27. Describe "professionalism." What does it mean to you?
28. Why should you be hired for this position?

29. Tell us/me about your planning habits. If there a particular format that you use? Do you plan on a weekly basis?
30. Scheduling is tricky and difficult at times. How do you approach conflicts that arise in regard to scheduling with your colleagues?
31. State your educational philosophy. How do you incorporate it into your daily instruction?
32. What are the three most important characteristics of an effective educator/teacher?
33. Why do you feel you are qualified for the position for which you are applying?
34. How would you handle difficult parents?
35. What three words would your students use to describe you?
36. If a student comes into school with a bruise on their face that you did not notice the day before and that student comes up to you and says I need to tell you something but you have to promise not to tell anyone. What do you do? ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
37. What does it mean to be a teacher?
38. What is the ideal relationship between a teacher and student?
39. What motivates you to achieve your goals to be successful?
40. How would you describe yourself as a team member?
41. How would others describe you as a team member?
42. Why are you leaving your current position? ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
43. Why do you want to teach in this district? ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
44. What are some characteristics that you would find favorable when dealing with administration?
45. What is a challenge that you feel you recently overcame (in your teaching career)? How did you search out resources to help you do so?
46. Describe an extraordinary teacher. ([Click here to read a possible response, an excerpt from Road to Teaching](#)) ([Also read this example of an extraordinary teacher](#))
47. How do you manage stress? ([Click here to read related posts](#))
48. Are you fluent in any language other than English?
49. What else would you like to share about yourself?
50. What experience have you had working with at-risk students?
51. How would you deal with an uncooperative colleague?
52. What would you expect your students to have gained after having you as a teacher?
53. How would you handle a parent that disagrees with your grading method or an assignment?
54. How do you keep parents informed of student progress?
55. How would you describe a gifted student?
56. Have you earned an honor or an award anytime in your life? If so, what was it?
57. What part of teaching do you look forward to most?
58. What part of teaching do you look forward to least?
59. What are your endorsements in?
60. How would contribute to building and improving staff morale?
61. How do you manage (cope with) stress? ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
62. Describe a motivating teacher. ([Click here to read a possible response, an excerpt from Road to Teaching](#))
63. Why should we hire you over other applicants? ([Click here to read a possible response, an excerpt from Road to Teaching](#))

64. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
65. What do you know about [AVID](#) and would be interested in doing it?
66. Does a student being at risk have to do with his/her intelligence level? ([Click here to read a possible response](#))

Classroom Management Questions

1. If a student said she thought you were the worst teacher she ever had, what would you say?
2. If a student came to you and said, "None of the other students like me," what would you tell him/her?
3. How do you feel if a student does not meet a deadline?
4. Do you believe you should build rapport with students? If yes, how?
5. How do you feel about noise in the classroom? How do you handle noise in the classroom?
6. How do you organize your classroom?
7. Describe the first five minutes of your class.
8. Give me an example of a rule or procedure in your classroom?
9. You have a child with autism in your classroom who has a hard time with transitions. How do you accommodate this child?
10. Provide an example of how you handled a peer conflict.
11. What is your approach to classroom management? ([Click here to read a possible response, an excerpt from Road to Teaching](#))

Discipline Questions

1. Some people say you should demand respect. Do you agree or disagree?
2. It is the first day of class, you are writing something on the board and a paper wad hits you in the back, what would you do? Later the same day, if all the students drop their pencils, what do you do?
3. How do you handle a child who seems gifted, but is a discipline problem?
4. Describe your discipline plan.
5. How do you curb student misbehavior? ([Click here to read a possible response, an excerpt from Road to Teaching](#))
6. Describe a troubled student and how you helped him/her.
7. How would you handle a student that constantly disrupted the learning environment?
8. How would you handle a student that was caught cheating on a test? ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
9. You witness a student bullying another student in the hallway. How would you respond?
10. A student throws a book at another student during class. How would you respond?
11. A student swears in class. How do you respond?

Pedagogy Questions

1. What will you do to engage parents? How will you get them actively involved in their child's education?
2. How do you give your students recognition? Do you think a student can have too much recognition?
3. What are various reading strategies you use?

4. How would you incorporate math into your curriculum (for non-math teachers)?
5. What strategies would you use to enhance students' writing skills?
6. What are various vocabulary strategies you use?
7. What's the difference between a good and a great teacher?
8. How would you handle making a difficult phone call to a parent?
9. Explain how you use differentiated instruction in the classroom?
10. Describe two to three instructional tools you need in the classroom?
11. What role do standards play in your classroom?
12. Describe your teaching style.
13. Describe your ideal lesson.
14. Have you team-taught? What's your opinion on it?
15. Describe a teaching strategy you used to maximize the learning potential of all students.
16. How would you decide what should be taught in your classroom?
17. Describe any multicultural, gender fair classroom practices you have used in the past and how you would ensure equality among your students.
18. What is your philosophy on homework? ([Food for thought](#))
19. Describe your use of auditory, visual, and hands-on teaching techniques.
20. Provide an example of a successful lesson that you created and used.
21. How do you keep your students engaged 90-100% of the time
22. Describe adaptations have you used with students with special needs.
23. Full inclusion is part of the educational environment. How would you meet the needs of a full inclusion child and design a program?
24. How do you inspire creativity in your classroom?
25. A student continually fails to turn in their homework. How do you respond to this?
26. How would you meet the needs of English Language Learners in your classroom?
27. Describe how you plan your lessons. ([Click here to read a possible response, an excerpt from Road to Teaching](#))
28. How will you ensure students understand your lesson's learning objectives? ([Click here to read a recent post from Road to Teaching's blog](#))
29. How does your philosophy translate to the types of lessons you actually have students complete in your classroom?
30. What are some of your strategies for differentiating lessons?
31. Scenario: There are students from four different ethnic groups in middle school the principal added a student with pretty severe emotional/behavior problems and a student with cerebral palsy in a wheelchair. Students from the ethnic groups stick together ,never making friends with outsiders. Many of the subgroups communicate in their native language. The emotionally disturbed student is making matters worst by telling ethnic jokes to anyone who is listening. There are rumors of an ambush after school to teach the emotionally disturbed student a lesson. You agree that the whole class for that matter needs a lesson, but not this kind. Critically think how you could handle this situation? How would you teach the class to feel more comfortable together? What is your first goals in working on this problem? And how could these issues affect the grade level you teach? (Thanks Debra for your question).

Professional Development Questions

1. What are your goals for next year?
2. What is the last book you read or conference you attended that benefited you professionally? ([Click here to review Road to Teaching's recommended books](#))
3. How do you keep abreast of your field?
4. What will you be doing in five years?
5. What is the most significant professional development you have received?
6. How do you evaluate your own teaching?
7. What professional development workshops would you like to attend?
8. What will make you a great teacher in 5-10 years? ([Click here to read a possible response, an excerpt from Road to Teaching](#))

Student Learning Questions

1. How do you use technology to enhance student learning? ([Check out this link for 100 Free Web Tools for Teachers](#) for ideas)
2. How would you rank these in importance and why? Planning, discipline, methods, evaluation.
3. How do you encourage students to learn? Can a student be forced to learn?
4. Do you make learning fun? Give an example.
5. How do you encourage students to be active in learning?
6. How do you communicate your student learning expectations?
7. How do you know that your students are learning?
8. How do you support 501 students' and special services students' learning?
9. What is the number one factor that contributes to student learning?
10. How do you motivate your students? ([Click here to read a possible response, an excerpt from Road to Teaching](#))

Behavior-Based Interview Questions

Read more about behavior-based interview questions and how to answer by [clicking here](#).

Curriculum

1. Describe the experiences you have had in implementing a standard-based curriculum.
2. Describe a unit of curriculum that you have taught.
3. Tell me about an individual lesson that went well.

Methods and Planning

1. How have you divided large amounts of material to be covered? (Hint: Show a sample curriculum or discuss how you would use a curriculum map that includes learning objectives, assessments, activities, and standards)
2. How would you write a plan and what is included in each plan?

Classroom Management

1. Describe classroom management plans that you have used.
2. How have you motivated your students?

Homework and Grading

1. Describe a grading system that has worked well for you in the past?
2. How have you dealt with students who do not complete their homework?

Communication and Professionalism

1. Describe how you conduct a parent/guardian conference?
2. Share an example of a communication with a parent that helped you in dealing with the child.
3. What have you read/studied recently that led to a change in your classroom?
4. What parts of your teacher training do you use the most? (Hint: Avoid saying anything negative. Anything like you were bored or not engaged will lead the interviewer to believe you will act the same in staff meetings, etc. Rather, describe 1-2 positive areas of your training, how you used it, and it's impact)

Elementary

1. What are the most important things a child should be learning in kindergarten?
2. What type of reading program did you use in student teaching?
3. If I walked into your classroom during reading time, what would I see?
4. Tell me what you know about the 4-block Literacy Model.
5. How would you handle difficult parents?
6. Tell me what you know of the reading first grant?
7. Tell me what learning strategies you know that are research-based?
8. How would you help a child who is unable to read or comprehend? (answer varies based on grade level) ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
9. What math programs do you use (or plan to use) in your classroom?
10. How do you teach writing? ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
11. What are educational issues or trends affecting elementary teaching?
12. How would you teach the alphabet? Give examples. (provided by [irishangelkris](#)) ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
13. How would you teach your class that a nickle is worth five cents? (provided by [irishangelkris](#)) ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
14. What are the list and describe the 5 reading components? (provided by [irishangelkris](#))
15. All of your teaching experience so far is in lower elementary grades, do you feel you are capable to teach the upper elementary grades (3,4,5) and why?

Middle School

1. You teach middle school Reading. The class has to read a required class reading book. How do you get the student who says that they hate this book and refuse to read it to read this book? ([Click here to read a possible response](#))
2. If you had to choose two required reading books for middle school, what two would they be?
3. How will keep middle school students engaged 90-100% of the time?
4. Why do you want to teach at middle school?
5. What are the benefits and challenges to working at the middle school level?
6. How would you respond if you saw a student being bullied in the hallway?
7. How would you describe middle school students?
8. What makes you well-suited to teach middle school students?
9. What activities have you have implemented that reflect your philosophy of education as it relates to middle school students?

Secondary – Career and Technical Education

1. How do you keep abreast of current business trends?
2. Give an example of a lesson or unit that teaches one or more [employability skills](#).
3. How would you [incorporate leadership into your classroom](#)? ([Click here to download some leadership ideas for the classroom from WAME](#))
4. What are the most desired skills employers want to see in their new hires? How do you as a teacher address this?
5. How will you connect your curriculum to the real-world?
6. How will you build partnerships within the local and business community?
8. How important are soft skills compared to hard skills? How will you teach soft skills?
9. Career exploration is important. How will you incorporate this into your class?
10. Describe your technical expertise.

Secondary – Foreign Language

General Questions

1. With what frequency do you foresee using the various components of learning a language into your lessons? (listening, reading, writing, speaking and culture)
2. In foreign language classes, when students begin to fall behind it can be detrimental to their performance because so much learning is built on previous knowledge. What interventions will you use to help the students who are not achieving academically in your classroom?
3. If you HAD to pick one out of the five (speaking, writing, listening, reading, culture), which do you think is the MOST important? Why?
4. Going on your response to #3, what do you do to help students with that everyday in your room? What activities force students to do that “thing” (speak, write, etc.)?
5. What is your belief on the best way to learn a language? Which do you think is ideal following a book, taking a grammatical/translation approach, utilizing [TPRS](#), or having a mix? (Be aware of what that school district uses here!)

Spanish Questions

1. Que libro leíste el año pasado que de que era?
2. Como puedes apoyar los alumnos en sus vidas personales sin ser sus amigos?
3. If you are teaching a lesson and a native Spanish speaking student kept blurting out the answers what would you do? Or how would you handle it?
4. How would you increase students learning experience if they have a negative attitude towards the class?
5. Describe a situation where you had to put a team of students together (mixed, with both native and non-native Spanish-speaking students) to work on a Spanish project successfully. Or if Spanish has never been taught before describe how you think it could/would be done.
6. The person in this position needs to be innovative and proactive. Can you describe some things you have done or that could be done to demonstrate these qualities to create enthusiasm and motivation towards learning Spanish?

7. ¿Cómo aprendió Ud. su español?

Secondary – English Language Learners

1. How would you welcome a student who is new to the country into the school?
2. How do you incorporate cultural awareness and sensitivity into the curriculum?
3. How do you communicate classroom expectations to a group with varying language abilities?

Secondary – Language Arts / English

1. What strategies would you use to help struggling readers in the Language Arts classroom?
2. What strategies will you use to teach grammar?
3. Give us an example of a unit designed to teach the elements of fiction?
4. Describe a unit you designed for the classroom and focus on the process of designing the unit from beginning to end.
5. How will you incorporate culturally diverse literature in your class?
6. Discuss the last author/book you have read?
7. How do address plagiarism in your classroom?
8. What is your approach to teaching literature and/or language arts?

Please email us your LA specific teacher interview questions at eric@road2teaching.com

Secondary – Mathematics

1. What manipulatives do you use? How effective are they?
2. Give an example of a topic (i.e. fractions) that students tend to have conceptual difficulties with. Now teach me this topic (and show me how you would handle dealing with the conceptual problems).
3. How will you make math relevant to the students? ([Click here for a PDF that lists math relevancy websites](#))
4. What is your opinion on using calculators?

Please email us your math specific teacher interview questions at eric@road2teaching.com

Secondary – Science

1. What is your philosophy on teaching science to elementary kids? Teenagers? Economically disadvantaged kids?
2. Why do you want to be a science teacher?
3. What Science organizations are you involved with (as a member or other)?
4. Tell me about a current science event that you have read about this week? How would you use this in the classroom?
5. In which field of science do you feel particularly strong? Explain.
6. In which field of science do you feel the least knowledgeable/competent in? Explain.
7. If you were hired to teach starting this September, how would you go about setting up your science program?
8. What science curriculum do you have experience with? What do you like or dislike about them?
9. What role do you believe that the adopted Science book should serve in your classroom?
10. Where do you find resources other than the Science book in order to keep your students current on the constantly evolving knowledge of science?
11. What do you understand the inquiry method to be in science?

12. Why would or would not you use lab groups or lab partners in your class? How would you establish lab groups/lab partners (what criteria would you use)?
13. How would you evaluate lab groups/partners to be to know that each student is learning and participating?
14. How would you integrate technology into your science teaching? How would you integrate math? Reading? Writing? Social Studies?
- Special thanks to Science Gal
15. How will you make your subject(s) relevant to the students?
16. How important is hands-on lab and inquiry lessons?
- Special thanks to Suz
17. What lab safety methods do you implement in your program?
18. What is your type of assessment for lab groups?

Secondary – Special Education

1. What do you believe are the three major challenges facing special education today?
2. A special education teacher must be both organized and flexible. Give examples of ways that you have demonstrated both of these characteristics.
3. What does “teamwork” mean to you as a special education teacher?
4. How would you communicate with the parents of your students? What issues would prompt you to contact them?
5. How would you delegate responsibilities to a paraprofessional and monitor his/her performance?
6. How do you evaluate your own teaching skills to insure continual growth and refinement?
7. Paperwork/documentation is a strong concern in the area of special education. How will you manage those demands, in addition to your teaching responsibilities?
8. Describe the components of a reevaluation report.
9. Describe the main components of an IEP and what should go into each section.
10. One of the challenges for a special education teacher is documentation. How would you collect and record necessary data for the students’ ERs, IEPs, and NOREPs?
11. Describe how you would determine and deliver appropriate individualized instruction to the students.
12. What types of assessment have you used? What assessments would you use to document student learning and plan for future instruction? How would you use assessment to develop and modify IEP goals?
13. Unfortunately, there are some negative elements that you will encounter within the profession. How will you interact with those individuals so they will not alter focus?
14. To what specific area of special education are you most attracted and why?
15. Aside from your coursework, what additional reading have you done that is pertinent to your field?
16. The US Department of Education now recommends that schools use the RTI (“Response to Intervention” or “Response to Instruction”) Model rather than the Discrepancy Model to identify children with specific learning disabilities. Tell us what you know about this model.
17. How do you integrate technology into your teaching? Have you had any experience with specific technology to support the needs of special education students?

18. Given a wide range of ability levels in a classroom, how do you assure compliance with each child's IEP?
19. Have you had any experience supporting students with IEPs in the regular classroom? How have you or would you do this?
20. What are your views on inclusion versus self-containment of special education students?
21. What would you do to address inclusionary support with the general education staff? How would you deal with a general education teacher who refused to honor IEP modifications for the special education students in their classrooms?
22. A general education teacher is concerned that a child with an IEP does not belong in her classroom due to behavior problems. How do you respond?
23. What do you feel is the best service delivery model for special education students?
24. How familiar are you with the IDEA guidelines for special education? What are some of the timelines related to IEPs?
25. Explain the impact of the Gaskins' settlement on special education in the public school setting.
26. Describe both a successful and a challenging collaboration experience with a general education teacher.
27. How will you coordinate/facilitate instruction to meet Adequate Yearly Progress goals?
28. Why do you want to work in this district/IU? Why should we hire you? What distinguishes you from the other candidates who applied for this position?

Secondary – Social Studies

1. Have you collaborated with another teacher in the same grade-level, but a different subject, e.g. Language Arts? If so, please describe this.
2. Do you make it a habit of watching the news or reading newspapers or news magazines? Do you watch local or national news programs?
3. Do you consider yourself well aware of current world issues and politics?
4. How would you integrate a school wide curriculum on a social issue such as gay rights into your classroom (e.g. [The Laramie Project](#))?

Questions to Ask at an Interview

Candidates are often asked at the end of the interview if they have any questions. This is an opportunity not only to learn more about the school, but also to demonstrate professionalism. You should avoid any negative-toned or salary/benefit questions. You will have the opportunity to ask financial questions when the position is offered. Here are several questions you may want to consider.

- What are you most proud of about your school?
- What would faculty, students, and parents say are the strengths of your school?
- What were your school's goals for the last year?
- How do teachers integrate technology into the classroom?
- What priorities would you have for me as a new faculty member?
- Do you offer a mentoring program?
- How does the school district support professional development?
- What extracurricular activity opportunities might be available?
- How do you see this school/district changing in the next five years?
- What are your top three goals for this school?
- If a parent were to walk into this school for the first time, how would you like that parent to feel about the school? What would make an impression on the parent?
- What is the biggest improvement that you think this school/district needs to make?
- How do you want the teachers in your building to view you (as their principal)?
- What are the two biggest issues facing the students in this school?
- How would you describe your leadership style?
- What is the average age and educational level of the teachers on this staff?
- What is the average length of time a teacher remains in this school?
- How would you describe the level of parent involvement in the activities and educational programs of the school?
- How does the school/district make use of parents' skills, abilities, and assets?
- In what ways has the community supported the school?
- Tell me about the students who attend this school. What would be the profile of the 'typical' student?
- What kinds of support staff members are available to help students and teachers?
- How does current staff welcome new teachers
- WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU RESPECT MOST IN A TEACHER?
- WHY DO YOU LIKE WORKING AT THIS SCHOOL?
- What is the next step in the hiring process? When can I expect to hear back from you?
- What is the teacher/student ratio in your district?
- Do you encourage teachers to earn graduate degrees?
- How many classes a day will I be expected to teach?
- What types of school activities promote parent-teacher-student interaction?
- What textbooks does the district use in this subject area?
- Do teachers participate in curriculum review and change?
- Does your district promote staff development activities and conferences? What types of programs have the teachers attended in the last year?
- What discipline procedures does the school use?
- To what extent do staff members work collaboratively to solve problems and respond to the needs of students?
- Does the administration encourage field trips for students?
- How are teachers assigned to extracurricular activities? Is compensation provided?
- What technology resources will be available to me in the classroom?
- What is the average class size?
- Is there a set curriculum? Do teachers have to follow strict pacing guides?
- May I have a tour of the school?

Writing Thank You Letters After Job Interviews

Author/Creation: Katie Moody, January 2010.

Summary: Provides a formula for writing thank you letters after job interviews. Also discusses common errors and supplies several example letters.

Learning Objectives: To state the goals of follow-up correspondence. To avoid common errors that writers make when writing or sending thank you letters. To use an organizational formula to draft thank you letters.

The interview process does not end at the end of a job interview. A potential employer will continue to consider your qualifications after the interview has concluded, and part of that consideration is made up of how you act after the interview. Your behavior after the interview might allow you a unique chance to shine; many of the common courtesies such as following up after an interview have fallen by the wayside, so you will have a chance to stand out by sending a thank you letter to your interviewer.

Follow-up correspondence serves several main goals.

- First, and most obviously, you want to thank the reader for meeting with you.
- Second, your follow-up allows you to reaffirm your genuine interest in the position. A potential hire should never underestimate the importance of showing interest for a position.
- Third, your follow-up suggests that you have a commitment to quality communication. An applicant who displays good communication skills has a better chance at getting a job; good communication skills before and after an interview indicate to an interviewer that an applicant will display these same skills on the job. For instance, Xerox will not hire someone who does not follow-up within ten days because the company assumes that an applicant would also not follow-up with customers (Locker & Kaczmarek, 2007).
- Finally, following up reminds the interviewer of who you were. You can include information in a follow-up letter that is specific to a conversation that you had in the interview (1) to remind the reader of who you are and (2) to tell the reader what parts of your conversation you found to be useful or engaging, which will tell the interviewer more about your individual personality. Following up also shows the interviewer that you were listening to what he or she said about company goals, values, etc.

Common Errors: Some Do's and Don'ts

Before we continue, it would be beneficial to stop and note some common errors that some writers face. These errors render the correspondence ineffective and may in fact hurt your chances at obtaining the job. According to Minninger (1992), there are three common errors that writers of follow-up letters need to be aware of.

1: Don't wait too long to respond.

A writer needs to be able to respond quickly and efficiently in order to adequately facilitate the communication process.

In order to avoid a lot of confusion regarding the appropriate wait time for sending a letter, a writer should begin writing a response letter immediately and send it to the interviewer as soon as possible. In fact, you are encouraged to make notes when the interview ends so that you can better draft your response. A quick response will show your reader that you were excited about your interview and interested in finding out the results.



Do send a letter within two business days.

2: Don't use form letters.

Form letters can be beneficial tools of communication in some instances, but a follow-up letter is not an appropriate place to use a generalized form letter. Your follow-up letter needs to be tailored to your specific communication situation—to the person or people who interviewed you about your interview.

Form letters cause several unique problems. First, the form letter sounds completely impersonal and greatly affects the tone that comes across to the reader. Second, the form letter often does not include any specific information about the interview. The specific information serves to both help the reader recall your meeting and show that you were interested in the interview.

Do write a letter tailored to your interviewer.

3: Don't send unrevised, poorly written letters.

This error is a common one for any piece of correspondence. Revision is a key element for good writing, and submitting sloppy, unrevised drafts of a letter for any type of correspondence will automatically reflect poorly on the writer's abilities.



A lack of revision also signifies to the reader that you are not committed to productive, positive communication (remember that one of the goals of a follow-up letter is showing the reader that you are committed to quality communication). Just like the cover letter that you wrote to get an interview, the follow-up letter is a sample of the quality of work that you can produce.

Do revise and proofread carefully.

Minninger's list of possible errors ends here, but I believe that there is one other pitfall that writers should avoid in follow-up letters such as these.

#4: Don't ask or answer questions.

At a first look, it might seem like a good idea to include a question in your follow-up letter because it puts pressure on the reader so that he or she must continue to correspond with you. As such, you create a letter that furthers your communication. However, asking questions in a follow-up letter can place an unnecessary burden on the reader. Questions also go against the purpose of the letter; you are writing to say thank you, not to get information. Questions can also be awkward for a reader if he or she does not intend to hire you; by placing a burden on that reader, you force him or her to respond to you even if you have not been chosen for a position.

There are circumstances where it is pertinent to include additional information, however.

1. When the interviewer has requested that you answer a question or provide additional information.
2. When you have had additional skill building after the interview that you were not able to discuss at the original meeting, such as extra training or additional project experience.

While the follow-up letter should not be used as a platform for continuing the meeting or requiring your reader to respond, you can offer to provide additional information or answer other questions at the reader's request.

Do provide additional information if it is requested by the reader or if it is something that you did not have the ability to discuss prior to the interview (such as additional training that took place after the interview).

Keeping these goals and common errors in mind, let's take a look at the organization of a follow-up letter and how that organization can help you achieve these goals.

Organization and Content

While the organization of any letter will change based on needs, there are three basic parts to any follow-up letter.

1. Statement of purpose.
2. Reminder of the events of the meeting.
3. Reaffirmation of your interest and qualifications.
4. Goodwill ending.

Let's discuss each of these parts and then consider an example.

The first part of the letter is the statement of purpose. A writer will want to let the reader know what the purpose of the letter is immediately so that a reader does not have to search through the document to find a purpose. Let the reader know immediately that you are writing to say thank you. This strategy will allow you to both inform the reader of your purpose and begin building goodwill at the beginning of the letter.

You will then want to present some information that directly relates to something that you discussed or did in your meeting. The types of information that you can include here are endless and depend entirely on what occurred during the actual meeting. For example, if the person who conducted the meeting gave you a tour of a facility, you might want to express gratitude and interest at the gesture, and perhaps even bring up a point in the tour that was of particular interest to you. You can also express excitement for a plan of action that might have been discussed in the meeting.



If applicable, you can also answer a question that was posed to you during an interview. Be careful doing this, however. If the reader specifically requested that you send some type of information to him or her, then that information should be sent. However, the follow-up letter should NEVER be used to answer questions that were not answered in the interview. In other words, answering questions and providing additional information about yourself in the letter should only be done at the behest of the reader; never include this type of information if it was not requested.

Like any business correspondence, a follow-up letter must have a goodwill ending. While the opening and body of a letter set the tone for the duration of the letter, the goodwill ending helps to set the tone for the future. You will want to make sure that your ending promotes goodwill by looking towards the future and building rapport; that includes providing contact information in case the reader wants to follow-up.

Example Letter

Let's take a look at a sample follow-up letter and see how considering the goals of the letter, remembering some common errors, and using a basic organizational strategy can help a writer draft a successful follow-up letter.

Dear Mr. Smithers:

I want to thank you for meeting with me Monday on June 1, 2009, for the English position. It was a pleasure to discuss Jackson High School's academic achievements with you and your team.

I enjoyed getting to show you and Mrs. Wilson my strategy notebook and to learn about the different reading methods that your English department uses for graduating seniors. I think that my experience, combined with my strategies for success, would work well with the reading methods of your English department.

Thank you again for the interview opportunity, and I hope to hear from you soon regarding the 9th grade English teacher position.

Best regards,

Barbara Stanwick (555)

555-5555

BStanwick@email.com

This letter provides an excellent sample for how a follow-up letter should look. The letter meets all of the goals that were discussed at the beginning of the handout and makes good use of the organizational format presented earlier. Let's look at how the writer uses each point of the organizational strategy to her advantage.

First, the writer includes a clear statement of purpose. Her statement of purpose works particularly well here because it includes an exact date to which the reader can refer.

Second, the writer reminds the reader of specific events that occurred during the meeting. Notice that the event that the writer mentions is not something that sounds generic; the event that the writer mentions is specific to the reader and what happened during the meeting.

Third, the writer has reaffirmed her interest and reminded the reader of some of her specific qualifications. This writer has done an excellent job with these tasks because she has directly connected what was discussed in the meeting with her qualifications.

Finally, the writer includes a goodwill ending that both looks towards the future and builds rapport. The writer also includes contact information at the end of her letter, thus further encouraging future communication with the reader.

THANK YOU LETTER FOR AN INTERVIEW

2020 Allbright Lane
Lincoln, Nebraska 685xx
April 17, 20xx

Ms. Marcia Bloomington, Principal
Mann Middle School
4321 Prescott Place
Denver, Colorado xxxxx

Dear Ms. Bloomington:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview for the position of ninth grade English teacher at Mann Middle School. Please also extend my gratitude to the students, teachers, and paraprofessionals who were members of the interview team.

I was impressed with Mann Middle School in a number of ways. First of all, I found it to be a beautiful facility with an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Additionally, I enjoyed meeting the students; they seem to feel very comfortable in their surroundings. I take this to be one sign of a successful school. Finally, I greatly enjoyed our discussion about school outreach efforts during the interview. From this conversation, I could see how positive and energetic the members of the faculty are. I believe that my teaching units, such as "Write Your Community" and "Discovery Dialogue," fit in well with the teaching philosophy I saw exhibited during my visit to your school.

Again, thank you for such a friendly and stimulating interview. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Michael T. Long