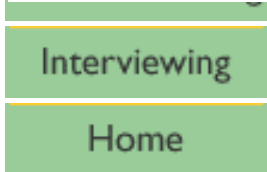




From Whence the Advice Cometh?

People freely offer advice out of a generous spirit and basic altruistic tendencies. It seems like the easiest way to teach someone (tell them what to do!). However, good teaching is not simply a matter of conveying information or constructing rules/guidelines for behavior. Instead, the aim is to empower students to think for themselves, knowing as you do that they'll do so confidently as life (and writing) presents them with new experiences and more complicated situations.

You'll be thinking "rhetorically" (and thus conceptually and generatively) when you ask, Where does that advice come from? What is its basis? What rhetorical decisions have been made? How has the context shaped the advice? What rhetorical principles seem to help generate the advice? Students need to know how to ask these questions and how to formulate good answers to them, for the sake of making writing an act of choice rather than a reflexive motion.



Job Search Correspondence

Cover Letter

A cover letter is a letter that is sent along with your resume to a perspective employer to indicate your interest in a job or position.

The cover letter:

Writer-centered. What does it do for the reader?

What is the basis of this advice?

- Identifies the position for which you are applying
- Indicates why you are interested in that position
- States your main qualifications
- Refers the reader to your enclosed resume
- Specifies the action (s) you will take in the pursuit of this employment opportunity

specific

Notice the implicit suggestion that you should say you'll call?

When writing a cover letter:

Why are the materials important?

- Use business letter format
- Use resume paper, preferably white, and a matching envelope of standard, 8 1/2" x 11", business correspondence size.
- Type your cover letter on a word processor.
- Ensure the letter is neat and free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.

Why "resume" paper?

How brief?

Is this done in the letter?

- Keep the letter brief and to the point
- Define the objective of your letter and what your next step will be in the application process
- Avoid negative approaches, boastfulness, exaggeration, insincerity, and inconsistency

Why? Answer that question, you'll think like a rhetorician!

4 sentences?
Introduces you?
"My name is"?

A cover letter is composed of three paragraphs. The first paragraph indicates the position that you are applying for, introduces you to the employer, states why you are interested in this particular career field or position, and explains why you are interested in that specific employer.

How does one summarize without copying? Why is this bad? What else could be done?

The second paragraph invites the employer to refer to your enclosed resume, then summarizes the specific skill sets you have obtained in addition to your degree that are applicable to the position for which you are applying. This paragraph should not be a copy of your resume but should focus on the general skills you have learned and applied through multiple experiences.

Notice that this all focuses on showing that you're a go-getter?

The third paragraph indicates the actions you will take to contact the employer and schedule an interview. You should indicate that you will actively contact the employer at a specified time, usually within one week, to arrange an interview. This method is more successful than asking the employer to contact you at their earliest convenience. However, if you indicate that you will contact the employer within one week be sure that you do so. You should provide all of your contact information including phone numbers, and email address and ask the employer to contact you if they have any questions.

How flexible is the form that's been outlined here?
How do you know? What else might be done?

Why is this so important, do you think?

Helpful Hints

Address the cover letter to an individual in a particular position, not just to a title, if possible. If you need assistance finding an individual's name check on CCO Express, with Career Fair organizers, or with advisors of CCO department contacts in your school or department. You may also want to check with alumni or friends who work in the particular organizations to whom you are writing. They may be able to determine the name of the individual to whom you should address your correspondence.

Follow-up

As with any contact you make in your job search, follow-up if you do not get a response to your correspondence.

Email

It is becoming a more common practice to email letters and resumes in a job search. However, it is still important to be professional and use the basic concepts of letter writing. It is equally important to follow-up when using email as your initial contact.

Thank You Letter

After an interview, it is advisable to send a thank you letter to the recruiter, both as a professional courtesy and as a method of