

A
GUIDE
for
RÉSUMÉ
APPLICATION LETTERS
and
EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES

Glimmerglass Opera
Production Department
2001

I. APPLICATION LETTERS

A. General stuff

Use a standard business letter format.

If you don't know what a standard business letter format looks like, go to your library, bookstore or campus career office to obtain any one of the many available style guides.

Include your return address & phone numbers.

Whatever format you use, it should contain a return address and phone number where you can *actually* be reached. This information will be on your résumé, but include it in the letter, too.

Print it on white paper.

Finally, the letter and résumé should be printed on white or cream colored paper, since darker colors do not xerox well.

Use your spell checker.

Computers have spell-checkers. Dictionaries continue to be published. Use one or the other. Check your grammar & punctuation, too. No matter what position you're seeking, poor spelling and sloppy grammar show a careless attitude toward an important task.

B. Specific stuff

The first paragraph should be all the employer has to read.

The first paragraph should always state the position(s) you are applying for, where or from whom you heard about the position(s), and the date(s) you are available for employment, if the ad or job posting listed a start date or employment period.

The above information is really all that the letter needs to contain and may be all that the employer actually reads.

The second paragraph.

However, your application may appear terse if you stop after one paragraph. Hence, you should continue with a second paragraph in which you *briefly* summarize relevant skills & experience, expanding on your résumé listings. Pay special attention to any skills or experience asked for in the job posting or ad. This is also the place to explain, again very briefly, why you feel qualified for the position or why you are interested in it or the company.

In closing.

Your closing paragraph should then include relevant contact information (temporary phone numbers w/applicable dates, etc) and should close with a "thank you" for their consideration of your application. **FINALLY, PLEASE SIGN YOUR LETTER!**

Most application letters are too long. This is the most common mistake I see.

Keep the letter brief & to the point. Do not write more than one page. Confine any comments about yourself and your goals to those appropriate to the position (intern, staff, manager, etc). The proper time to show that you know everything is at the interview.

Wrong assumptions could invalidate your application.

Rather than writing "I know that you require..." or "I know that I will be an asset to your staff...", be safe and try "If you require..." or "I feel that I have the skills necessary to contribute..."

Avoid stating the obvious.

To begin with, please do not introduce yourself in the first sentence. Writing "My name is so-and-so and I'm a junior at East West State" indicates that you don't trust me to find your name in the letter heading or closing, on the résumé or the envelope. If I can't figure out who you are and where you come from, you probably don't want to work for me anyway.

Further, statements such as "I am hardworking and love theater" are just superfluous. A handy rule of thumb is to imagine the opposite of a statement. Since you probably wouldn't state that you're lazy and hate theater, saying the opposite is unnecessary, self-serving and hence, risks aggravating the reader. Also avoid cliches. How many times have I heard or read, "I love theater" or "I was bitten by the bug."

C. Blind applications

You may at times make a blind application, inquiring about job openings in a company for which you would like to work. In that case, your first paragraph should explain how you know about the company, in what type of position(s) you are interested and when you are available.

It is also appropriate to follow up your application with a phone call to verify that your letter was received and inquire about either immediate or future employment opportunities. However, be prepared for a curt conversation and, in any event, don't pester the production manager...

D. Envelopes

Type or very neatly print the envelope.

Your envelope is the first thing of yours that an employer sees. If it's a mess, you've just made a messy first impression.

Make sure that you have the correct name and title on the envelope (*and in the letter*). If you're unsure of anything (is Terry a man or a woman?), call & ask.

Sample #5 A fine letter: the pertinent information is up front, it's all to the point and is actually helpful!

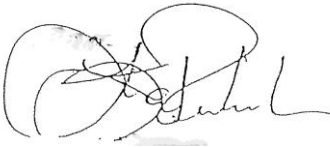
Mr. NAME
PO Box 191
Cooperstown, NY 13326
(607) 547-5704
July 20, 1994

Ms. NAME
Director of Finance
Boston Lyric Opera Company
114 State Street
Boston, MA 02109-2402
Dear Ms. NAME

Jen informed me this morning of a position available at Boston Lyric Opera requiring financial and administrative skills. As I am currently in a position at Glimmerglass Opera that relies on these skills and will be moving to Boston in late August, I am very excited by the prospect of working on your team at BLO

I am faxing to your attention a copy of my resume for your consideration and would very much like to meet with you to discuss the position in more detail. I will be in Boston on July 26 and 27 for meetings and would be happy to meet with you then if it is convenient for you. I will attempt to reach you later this afternoon to set up an interview. Please feel free to reach me at the above number should you need more information or wish to speak with me sooner. Again, thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to meeting you next week!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'J. L. L.', written in a cursive style.

NAME

Sample #1 This has been my favorite for years. If you can't tell what's wrong with it, go through the entire *Letters* portion of the *Guide* again!

Glimmer Glass Opera, Inc.
P.O. Box 191
Cooperstown, NY 1326

Dear Mr. Dropp

I am sitting in the sound booth, in the darkness, alone, watching patches of light splash across the stage as the student choreographers confer with the technical director of the dance concert. It's tech week, this is another endless rehearsal which seems to involve more waiting, repetition, and boredom than art. But I fight the urge to tune out. I remain alert, trying to absorb as much as possible. I watch the colors that dance across the stage. I make mental notes of different effects, subtle shading of power.

As have all other students of the craft, I am presently struggling to find a workable definition of what the art I'm pursuing is all about. In my theatre history class we toss around catchwords like "a mirror of society", "artistic manifestation of human emotion", etc., but so many of them fall flat to me. They strike me as being hopelessly empty and cliché. I believe that theatre, as an art form, has the power to shake people up, to move people, make them look at themselves and their worlds and think, and hurt, and rejoice, and maybe look for a change. That belief is why I'm a directing track, theatre major, but I need something stronger, more concrete, at least for right now. So I'm beginning to believe that theatre is about energy, and everything else is secondary. It is about the energy that each individual artist brings into a production, which combines with the energy of all others involved to create the energy of the piece. It is from this energy that motion, on the stage, through the audience, and out into society originates. I am finding that the more I accept this philosophy, the fewer excuses and smaller amount of time I have for laziness. I am discovering my own energy, within which, I honestly believe lies the power to create motion, but I understand that there are so many skills I must sharpen for myself first.

This is why I am looking for a paid summer theatre internship in the time between May 25 and August 30. I am especially interested in a job doing some form of technical theatre work, but I am willing to do any job that puts me in close proximity to the theatre. I am not afraid to do hard physical labor, and work long hours. Please consider this application.

This is a sample resume format for a simple technical resume.
You can use this format or alter it to suit the positions that you are applying for or skills you have.

FULL NAME
POSITION/S THAT YOU ARE APPLYING FOR

CURRENT ADDRESS
STREET
CITY, STATE ZIP
PHONE

PERMANENT ADDRESS
STREET
CITY, STATE ZIP
PHONE

EXPERIENCE

Job Title	PRODUCTION	Organization	Date
Job Title	PRODUCTION	Organization	Date
Job Title	PRODUCTION	Organization	Date
Job Title	PRODUCTION	Organization	Date
Job Title	PRODUCTION	Organization	Date
Job Title	PRODUCTION	Organization	Date
Job Title	PRODUCTION	Organization	Date

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Job Title	PRODUCTION	Organization	Date
Job Title	PRODUCTION	Organization	Date
Job Title	PRODUCTION	Organization	Date
Job Title	PRODUCTION	Organization	Date
Job Title	PRODUCITON	Organization	Date

EMPLOYMENT

Job Title	Employer, City, State	Date Started – Present or End
(brief one-line description of duties included if desired)		

Job Title	Employer, City State	Date Started – Date End
(brief one-line description of duties included if desired)		

Job Title	Employer, City State	Date Started – Date End
(brief one-line description of duties included if desired)		

HONORS AND AWARDS

Award	Organization	Date
Award	Organization	Date
Award	Organization	Date

EDUCATION

BA THEATRE ARTS, MINOR (GPA)	ANTICIPATED GRADUATION DATE
SIMPSON COLLEGE, INDIANOLA, IA 50125	

SPECIAL SKILLS

INCLUDE SUCH THINGS AS: Foreign Language, Special driving skills (trucks, tractors, fork-lift, standard transmission), Computer skills (platforms, application), Mechanical drafting, Mechanical perspective, Rigging, Welding, Makeup, Wigs, Facial Castings, Fiberglass construction, Scenic Painting, Lighting Control Boards (types), Light Maintenance, Sound equipment (multi-channel mixers), Reel-to Reel, Minidisk, CD burning), Woodworking skills, Musical Instruments, etc. Acting (if you feel you must)

REFERENCES

See attached page OR see reverse OR available on request