



Cover Letter Worksheet

Career Skills Handout Series

Name of Potential Employer: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

First Paragraph: Why are you interested in this employer?

What is the catalyst for the letter? (Reference any job announcement. If you were referred by an influential person, start your letter with that fact).

What are the criteria you used to decide to apply for this employer? (E.g., practice area, geographic location, public or private setting, type of clients, firm size, and reputation).

From the employer's website: What are the employer's practice areas? In the case of government/public interest organizations, what is the agency's mission?

What evidence establishes that you are aligned with the employer's philosophy/mission?

From the employer's website: What press releases involve matters in which you are interested or well prepared to excel?

For employers outside the area in which you live: What geographical ties do you have to this employer's location? When you have no "ties," think broadly; describe your interest in what the region offers (E.g., outdoor recreation, cultural activities).

What experiences do you have that intersect with what this employer does?

What would you find intellectually stimulating about working for this employer?

Graduates: What position(s) are you seeking? (E.g., post-bar clerkship, associate position once you have passed the bar exam—either or both. *Note: if included in third paragraph omit from first paragraph*).

Students: What type of position(s) are you seeking? (E.g., paid, volunteer, work-study, academic credit. *Note: if included in third paragraph omit from first paragraph*).

Second Paragraph: Why should this employer be interested in you?

Which of your academic credentials best establish that you would be an outstanding performer?

What relevant courses have you taken or do you plan to take? Are you pursuing/Were you awarded a relevant concentration/certificate? Is your undergraduate major relevant? (E.g., criminology, pre-law).

What positive comments have you received from professors pertaining to your analytical, research, writing and other practical skills?

Which of your practical experiences best establish that you would be an outstanding performer?

What positive comments have you received from supervising attorneys? (E.g., Analytical research and writing, oral communication skills).

Which two or three of your personal qualities best establish that you would be an outstanding performer?

Proof (example):

Third Paragraph: What do you want to happen next?

Graduates: What position(s) are you seeking? (E.g., post-bar clerkship, associate position once you have passed the bar exam—either or both. *Note: if included in first paragraph omit from third paragraph.*)

Students: What type of position(s) are you seeking? (E.g., paid, volunteer, work-study, academic credit. *Note: if included in first paragraph omit from third paragraph.*)

If part-time, how much time do you have available? (E.g., quarter-time, half-time, three-quarters time, full-time.)

For employers outside the area in which you live: Are there dates you can tell the employers you will be in their areas (to ask for meetings)?

What documents are you enclosing?
