Make Your Cover Letter as Awesome as You Are!

ACRL NEC & NELIG Annual Conference 2023

wheaton
college
massachusetts

Who are we?

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You will:

1) Analyze a job ad to determine what you should address in your letter

2) Make your letter complement and enhance your resume

3) Learn tips and tricks for writing a letter that will get you noticed

Let's Look at an Example

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Only the Menti presentation
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Mentimeter

What is the purpose of a cover letter?

Demonstrate to the search committee that you have the expertise, skills, experience, and abilities that they are looking for.

Do What Librarians Do

- Before you write your cover letter, research the library and institution
  - What are their goals and values?
    - Vision, mission and values
    - Strategic plan
    - Other descriptions of who they are and what they do
  - What can you learn about the department
    - Size, roles, structure
    - Responsibilities, projects

Your cover letter should

- Be tailored to each job you apply for

    - Address the responsibilities and requirements listed in the job add

    - Include specific examples that reflect the requirements of the job you are applying for

- Highlight the soft skills that employers value

- Compliment your resume, not duplicate it

Activity: Job Ad Analysis

Activity Instructions

Complete the provided table.

1. Start with a close reading of the one of the job ads. Carefully identify the experiences and skills that are stressed throughout in the first column.
2. Then, consider those items on the resume that can be expanded to address the job requirements. List these skills in the second column labeled "Resume."
3. Finally, based on those areas of experience that require more explication, Write notes on your example in the middle column labeled "Cover letter." For example, if the job ad asks for project management experience, consider all of the projects, regardless of the applicant's role in them and whether they occurred in a library context. What are the steps in project management? How does the experience recognize those steps?
4. Share! Describe the job ad you were working with and the cover letter item(s) you want to include

Example

Job ad detail	Resume	Cover letter
(Asst Director) Oversee the provision of exceptional user services, ensuring the library meets the diverse information needs of students, faculty, and staff.	Skill: Project management	My team initiated and managed a student-led outreach program to welcome commuter students to the library. From definition of the program scope to marketing and events, my contributions resulted in allocation of a dedicated space for the increased population of commuters in the library.

Final tips

Think about your dream job, the roles you've had to prepare for it, and the attributes you possess to be successful in it. Take a few minutes to write down why you are qualified for that job.

I believe that my experience coordinating and expanding an information literacy program, initiating and managing short and long term projects, and developing teaching and learning tools for colleagues, faculty, and students has adequately prepared me as a candidate for this position.

My career blends experience in traditional liaison and librarian roles with strategic program building, community engagement and collaboration, advocacy for the library and open access, as well as a solid commitment to user-centered service and teaching. My background is informed by a forward-thinking mindset, anticipation, and tolerance for continuous change.

Make writing custom letters easier

Experience	Project/Activity	Language
Project Management	DEI Collections Assessment	Our DEI focused collecitons evaluation had many moving parts that required expert project management...
	Digitization Project	This project gave me the oppertunity to hone my project management skills...
Collaboration	DEI Collections Assessment	During the planning stage of this project we worked with the college's DEI lead. As the librarians on the project had a long standing collaborative relationship, we know that we had to consciously disrupt this relationship and reform it to include the DEI lead to ensure true and effective collaboration.

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Questions?

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