

L.A.T.I.N.O. Career Marketing Letters Generate Even More Job Interviews

By Murray A. Mann and Rose Mary Bombela-Tobias

Authors, Barron's *The Complete Job Search Guide for Latinos* (www.JobSearchGuideforLatinos.com)

MYTH: Recruiters and hiring officials do not read cover letters and other career marketing communications.

TRUTH: A strategically written marketing letter can be the deciding factor for an applicant securing an employment interview. The added effort sets you apart from other applicants that submit a generic letter or only a résumé.

REALITY 1: In a recent study by the Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM), more than two-thirds of human resource managers view well-written, personalized cover letters as advantageous to a job applicant. Nearly half believe that they are more important than or just as important as résumés.

REALITY 2: A poorly written letter can abruptly end an applicant's candidacy.

L.A.T.I.N.O. career marketing letters are persuasive career marketing tools that set you apart from the competition in today's tough job market.

L.A.T.I.N.O. career marketing letters are dynamic and honest portraits of "Brand YOU."

L.A.T.I.N.O. career marketing letters are crafted to be read from the hiring official's perspective.

L.A.T.I.N.O. career marketing letters:

Link to a specific audience. Cover letters are situation-dependent. Your target may be a particular job, reader, employer, or industry. To be successful, tailor your message to inspire the reader to carefully consider your résumé.

Are a complement to, not a repetition of, your résumé. The cover letter allows you to personalize your application. Using your letter to focus on information that will immediately appeal to the employer gives you an opportunity to impress the reader that you took the time to research the company's needs.

Ties your Personal Career Brand to the employer's buying (hiring) motivators. Your cover letter should project your ability to satisfy the employer's need to be more competitive, expand business, make or save money, improve productivity, save time, attract or retain customers, build relationships, or solve a specific problem.

Imparts information that might not be appropriate on a résumé. Cover letters are a great way to provide the additional information that some employers request (i.e. problem-solution scenarios, salary requirements, salary history, references).

Nails down your written communication skills. Employers prefer applicants who demonstrate good communication skills. If the position requires bilingual candidates, be sure to send your letter in both English and Spanish.

Orchestrates an invitation to an interview. Leverage the L.A.T.I.N. portion of your letter by concluding with compelling statement and request for an interview.

¡BUENA SUERTE!

L.A.T.I.N.O. Career Marketing Checklist

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- Is my career marketing letter tailored to a specific job target, reader, theme or purpose?
- Is my career marketing letter crafted to be read from the hiring official's perspective, does it address the employer's needs and appeal to the reader's hiring motivators?
- Does my career marketing letter supplement my résumé with a personalized sales pitch and present the additional information the reader needs?
- Does my career marketing letter illustrate how I can handle the job? That I have positive work attitudes, solid interpersonal skills and a willingness to go above and beyond what is expected?
- Does my career marketing letter tie my *Personal Career Brand* – who I am, what I can do, and the value I bring to the needs of the specific reader?
- Is my career marketing letter inviting to read? Does the layout look professional? Is there adequate white space? Are the fonts readable? Is the résumé printed on quality paper?
- Does my career marketing letter contain keywords that highlight specific industry and job-target related skills?
- Does my career marketing letter demonstrate position related soft and transferable skills such as verbal and written communication, organization, leadership, planning, aptitude for learning, adaptability, creativity, resourcefulness, problem solving and work ethic?
- Does my career marketing letter include plenty of active verbs (managed, coordinated, planned, implemented, directed, initiated, conducted, completed, recommended . . .)?
- If necessary, have I responded to an employer's request for specific information (salary requirements, salary history and references) by presenting the information in a way that markets me as a top candidate?
- Where appropriate, have I addressed my career marketing letter to the correct individual and / or clearly referenced the specific position I am applying for?
- Is my writing clear, action-oriented, and well organized?
- Does my career marketing letter nail down my written communication skills?
- If applying for a bilingual position, have I written a second career marketing letter that demonstrates my Spanish language skills?
- Have I (and others) proofread my career marketing letter for typos, grammar, consistent formatting, and readability?
- Have I tested the plain text or ASCII version of my career marketing letter to ensure its internet functionality?

- Will my career marketing letter make it passed a 15 to 60 second initial screening?
- Have I closed my career marketing letter seeking action by the reader or indicating how I would follow-up?
- Does my career marketing letter inspire the recipient to take the next step – carefully read my résumé, identify me as a top candidate, and set-up an interview?