

13.2 Reviewing Grammar

As you have read, it is crucial that your job letter be error-free. One common error in job letters, and one that spell-checker programs will not catch, is

confusing word pairs like *affect/effect*. Practice choosing the correct word with Exercises B.12, B.13, and B.14 in Appendix B.

13.3 Analyzing First Paragraphs of Prospecting Letters

All of the following are first paragraphs in prospecting letters written by new college graduates. Evaluate the paragraphs on these criteria:

- Is the paragraph likely to interest readers and motivate them to read the rest of the letter?
 - Does the paragraph have some content that the student can use to create a transition to talking about his or her qualifications?
 - Does the paragraph avoid asking for a job?
1. Redecor just added three new stores in Ohio. They also got voted best hardware store in Denton. This is where I want to start my career in supply-chain management.
 2. From the time I was old enough to walk, my father involved me with the many chores and decisions that happen on a successful family farm. He taught me to work, to manage employees, and to handle large amounts of money. I believe my lifelong experience has prepared me to contribute to the continued success of your company.
 3. Two years ago, my right leg was crushed in a car accident in the middle of my second semester of college. Although I had to have two surgeries and was on heavy painkillers, I successfully completed the semester with a 3.4. I know that this experience shows I have what it takes to succeed in your law firm.
 4. For the past two and one-half years I have been studying turf management. On August 1, I will graduate from ——— University with a BA in Ornamental Horticulture. The type of job I will seek will deal with golf course maintenance as an assistant superintendent.
 5. Ann Gibbs suggested that I contact you.
 6. Each year, the Christmas shopping rush makes more work for everyone at Nordstrom's, especially for the Credit Department. While working for Nordstrom's Credit Department for three Christmas and summer vacations, the Christmas sales increase is just one of the credit situations I became aware of.
 7. Whether to plate a two-inch eyebolt with cadmium for a tough, brilliant shine or with zinc for a rust-resistant, less expensive finish is a tough question. But similar questions must be answered daily by your salespeople. With my experience in the electroplating industry, I can contribute greatly to your constant need of getting customers.
 8. What a set of tractors! The new 9430 and 9630 diesels are just what is needed by today's farmer with his ever-increasing acreage. John Deere has truly done it again.
 9. Prudential Insurance Company did much to help my college career as the sponsor of my National Merit Scholarship. Now I think I can give something back to Prudential. I'd like to put my education, including a BS degree in finance from ——— University, to work in your investment department.
 10. Since the beginning of Delta Electric Construction Co. in 1993, the size and profits have grown steadily. My father, being a stockholder and vice president, often discusses company dealings with me. Although the company has prospered, I understand there have been a few problems of mismanagement. I feel with my present and future qualifications, I could help ease these problems.

13.4 Improving You-Attitude and Positive Emphasis in Job Letters

Revise each of these sentences to improve you-attitude and positive emphasis. You may need to add information.

1. I got laid off at Barlons three months ago when they down-sized.
2. Your company needs someone like me, who has the experience and knowledge to take your department to new heights.
3. I may not be the most qualified candidate you will see, but with your location and financial struggles, I am certainly the best you will get.
4. I understand that your company has had problems due to the mistranslation of documents during international ad campaigns.
5. Included in my résumé are the courses in Finance that earned me a fairly attractive grade average.
6. I am looking for a position that gives me a chance to advance quickly.
7. Although short on experience, I am long on effort and enthusiasm.

8. I have been with the company from its beginning to its present unfortunate state of bankruptcy.
9. I wish to apply for a job at Austin Electronics. I will graduate from Florida State in May. I offer you a degree in electrical engineering and part-time work at Best Buy.
10. I was so excited to see your opening. This job is perfect for me.
11. You will find me a dedicated worker, because I really need a job.

13.13 Writing a Prospecting Letter

Pick a company you'd like to work for and apply for a specific position that is not being advertised. The position can be one that already exists or one that you would create if you could to match your unique blend of talents.

Address your letter to the person with the power to create a job for you: the president of a small company, or the area vice president or branch manager of a large company.

Create a job description; give your instructor a copy of it with your letter.